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THE HILLYARS AND THE BURTONS: A STORY OF TWO FAMILIES.

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CHAPTER LXIII.

GERTY'S ANABASIS.

THE first thing Mr. Compton, did on hearing of Lady Hillyar's disappearance, was to take a cab and dash off to the Nalders' in Grosvenor Place, in the wild hope that Mrs. Nalder *might* know something about Sir George Hillyar's whereabouts, and that she might enable him to communicate personally with him. The house was blazing with lights, and the carriages were flashing rapidly up to the door; but kind Nalder came down to him. Seeing no one but a gentle and mild-looking old gentleman before him, he ventured to talk his native language, which he would not have ventured to do for his life in his own drawing-room, and explained to Mr. Compton that Mrs. N. had got on a tarnation tall hop—a regular Old Tar River breakdown; and, seeing Mr. Compton was in full dress, he hoped his business would keep, and that he would jine 'em and shake a toe. Having relieved his heart by so much of the dear old prairie talk, and seeing Mr. Compton was anxious and distressed, he began to speak in diplomatic American—absolutely perfect English, slightly Frenchified in style, and spoken a little through the nose; English which, under the present presidency, seems to be going out of fashion, as Webster's English gives way to Lincoln's, and Mc'Clellan's to Grant's.

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He was very much distressed at what Mr. Compton told him. Lady Hillyar's jealousy against Mrs. Nalder, to which he had so delicately alluded, was an old source of distress to him and his wife. As for their having any knowledge whatever of Sir George Hillyar's whereabouts, they had actually none at all; and, if he might speak without giving offence, had no wish for any.

"As for your suspicion of her having drowned herself, my dear sir," Nalder continued, "I would banish that from my mind utterly. What earthly reason can she have for such a proceeding? Pooh, pooh, my dear sir—if you will allow me to speak so to a man so much older than myself—you are fanciful. Because a woman talks about swallows going under water, is she, therefore, necessarily to follow the precedent herself?"

Mr. Compton stood silent for half a minute; before he had time to speak, Mr. Nalder rammed both his hands into the bottom of his breeches' pocket, and said, in that loud, snarling whine which it has pleased the Americans to adopt in moments of emergency—

"I'll tell you whawt, lawyer: I'll bet New York against New Orleans, or Chicago against Kingston, that she has bolted to Australey, back to her sister."

So she had. But, first of all, Mr. Compton insisted on believing that she had drowned herself—in consequence of that unlucky remark of hers about the

swallows. Next, he insisted that she could never have started for Australia without telling him, which was equally nonsensical. Thirdly, he advanced the theory that she hadn't got any money, quite forgetting that George had allowed her a privy purse of 400*l.*, of which she probably hadn't spent 100*l.* And, lastly, just when he had determined to make strict inquiries about the London Docks, Gerty was quietly arranging her cabin on board the *Baroda* at Southampton.

She would not face another winter; she had wit left to see that her wit was going, and that it would be wiser to put herself under the protection of the Oxtons. She was also uncertain of her position. She could not tell whether any of them would prevent her, or whether they had the right; so she determined to have no argument about the matter. One evening after dark, taking no more with her than she could carry, she managed, sometimes carrying Baby and sometimes letting him walk, to get across country to a station on the main line of the South Western, where she was not known, in time for the last train, and by it went on straight to Southampton. The next morning she quietly bought her luggage, and moved to another hotel to avoid attention. In a week the good ship went thundering out between the Shingles and the Needles; and, when the great chalk wall was passed, and Alum Bay was only a wonderful recollection, Gerty felt that she was free.

She had taken passage only two days before the ship sailed, and had sense enough to use her own name, considering that fewer liberties would be taken with Lady Hillyar than with Mrs. Hillyar. She sat next the captain at dinner, and seldom spoke to any one else. Now she had got among other people once more, she found how nervous, timid, and hesitating these two years of seclusion had made her. She was afraid to speak for fear of saying some unutterable nonsense.

At Alexandria some more Australians joined them, making the whole number up to nine; but they were lost among

the Indians. And such as did know anything of her, only said that old Neville's daughter was giving herself airs since she had married a title; and so, after the Australians got into their own steamer at Point de Galle, and were alone together, none of them troubled themselves about the little fine lady of Cooksland.

Gerty had been accustomed to consider Melbourne a low sort of place, where the *bourgeoisie* were admitted into society, and you never knew whom you might meet; but when, between Sandridge and Emerald Hill, she came on the first clump of gum trees, with bracken fern growing beneath them, she loved it, and would love it for ever. It might be a low, upstart place, fifty years younger than Sydney, full of all sorts of people, nurse of all sorts of dangerous opinions; but it was Australia still. Wapping is not a nice place—nay, it is a very nasty place indeed; but one will love it because it is sometimes the first place that one puts one's foot on in England. It was not very difficult for Gerty to fall in love with dear old Melbourne, in spite of her having been trained by that veritable old squatter, her father, to consider it the City of Satan.

The passenger-list in the *Argus* announced the arrival of Lady Hillyar, and, moreover, that she was at the "Prince of Wales." Lady H—drove over in a few days from Toorak to call on her, but she was gone. She had dismissed her maid, and hired an open car as far as Albury, leaving most of her luggage behind.

Lady H—thought it very strange that Lady Hillyar had not gone by steamer to Sydney, and from thence, by New Caledonia, New Zealand, Queensland (then called Moreton Bay), New Hungary, New United Italy, New Poland, New Tartary, New Wapping, and New Beloochistan, on to Cooksland; but, supposing that Lady Hillyar was tired of the sea, she was not so much surprised after all at her going overland; for the distance between Albury and Cooksland was not so very great. Only a very small strip of New South Wales interposed.

Every schoolboy knows, or, according

to the latest critical formula, would be flogged for not knowing, that Albury is on the River Murray, and is the last town in the republic of Victoria, and that across the River you come into New South Wales. But every schoolboy does not know, inasmuch as no one but myself is in possession of the fact, that by holding to a native path through the bush from that place, in a direction north-eastern by south, you reach the frontier of Cooksland, by stout walking, within three days. Since the two-and-sixpenny duty on gold; this track has been much used by smugglers; and, if the Victorian Government will take advice, they will look to the matter. In the good time coming, when the Australian Federation set up on their own account, and, sickened with prosperity, feel the necessity of a little fighting, they need not despair of finding a *casus belli* among themselves. The difference of intercolonial tariffs will make as handsome a cause for a very pretty squabble as the devil himself could desire. "General Peter Lalor crossed the Murray yesterday, and attacked the enemy's earthworks at Three Mile Creek. He was forced to retire with a loss of 400 men. The Sydney-siders' loss is considered by him to have been far greater." How pretty that will read! But we have read some queerer things than that lately from America.

But Gerty? She discharged her car at Albury, paying the man forty-five pounds. She had made her resolution; she had determined to *walk* across into Cooksland.

The Bush had no more terrors for her than Regent Street has for you. If she met a Bush hand, and her honour was in question, why she had provided herself with a revolver. It was mentioned months ago that one of the two great recollections of her life was first being taken to a ball at Sydney; and another was hinted at only, as we intended to reserve it for this place. One summer's day, when she was a child, after she and Aggy had been gathering quantangs by the creek, her father, old Mr. Morton, Mr. Dawson, and young Clayton, had come

suddenly home, said something which frightened their mother out of her wits, had barricaded the door, and loaded their guns. Soon after they began shooting at some men outside, and the men shot at them through the windows, and broke the claret jug on the sideboard. She remembered that these men, the bush-rangers, had broken in the door, and that Mr. Dawson had shot down two of them, and killed another by bending his head back, and that her mother had kissed Mr. Dawson afterwards—that she had been sorry for the poor men, as she was for the inhabitants of Jericho, who had not shot into any one's windows, or at least it wasn't mentioned—that her mother was very angry with her, and said that a girl who hadn't gumption enough to drive a knife into a bush-ranger's heart would not have the courage to drive it into her own, and was unfit to live. Gerty had learnt from her mother how to defend her honour.

How quaint that old Australian life seems to one! High refinement in many cases, but the devil always at the door. Not, as in India, a sudden, furious, unexpected devil, tearing all to pieces; but a recognised devil, standing always ready. "This is the last of that seal of Lafitte, sir, and the blacks are crowding round and looking awkward." "*The Illustrated News* is come, sir, but no *Spectator* this mail, and Mike Howe is out again, sir, and has stuck up Dolloy's, and burnt one of the children, sir. Do you think he will take us next, or the Macdonalds?" Those are the sort of little mares-tails you get at the outside edge of that vast cloud of English influence which has now overshadowed fully one-sixth of the human race. And, until you have been to the edge, you will find it difficult fully to appreciate the extreme meteoric disturbance which you will find there. Look at the case of a certain family the other day in Queensland—refined, hospitable people, beloved by every one—the young squire, sent over to Rugby, where he turned out champion cricketer. They all got suddenly, ruthlessly murdered by the blacks one summer's evening.

Were there any blacks on Gerty's

track? Plenty. Was she alarmed about them? Not the least in the world. There were none but *tame* blacks on that line of country; there was not a wild black within a hundred miles—they had all been tamed ever so long. And the process? Borrow Chief Justice Therry's book, and read pages 271 to 278, and see if you can sleep after it.

Gerty did not care for the blacks one halfpenny. She rather looked forward to meeting some of them, to have a good "patter" with them, and see if she had that extraordinary comical patois for which she was once famous—the Romany of Australia—the dialect used by the two races in communicating with one another; nearly all English, but which is made so wonderfully funny by the absence of all declension and conjugation in the native language, and which forces the adept to use only the first person singular (or rather the native substitute for it, "mine"), and the third; and confines him mostly to the present tense.¹ Gerty was anxious to see if she had forgotten her Blackfellow.

Starting from Albury, she came at once into Rabelais county, where she lay one night at the house of Count Raminagrobis, an aged French squatter, who told her fortune in four different ways, each of which came different. She got into Hawthorne county next morning, and spent the night with Mrs. Prynn and her charming *espiègle* daughter from New England. After this she passed through the great Grevillia scrub, where she left part of her gown and her few remaining wits, and, crossing the river Roebuck, came into Cooksland, in Jones county, and passed the night at Blogg's station, on the Flour Bag Creek; delighted to find herself once more with more familiar and less queer people, in the land of her birth.

She determined to make for the Barkers' station, that being the nearest

¹ *English*. "I saw a large number of horses beside the creek." *Blackfellow*. "Mine make a light eighty-four (generally, I rearet to say, adjective) horses along a creek." *English*. "I do not think it was he." *Blackfellow*. "Baal mine thupk it that one."

where she was known; and three glorious spring days she spent in getting there—three days passed in introducing Baby to the flowers, the animals, and the birds. The third evening, just at dark, she stood on the summit of Cape Wilberforce, and could see the lights of the town below her on the other side of the Erskine. There was a large light about two miles to the left—the light, in fact, of the new copper works; but between her and the river there was only one solitary light, about a mile below her, towards which she determined to make, to ask the way across the river; for she knew she must cross the river and pass right through the township before she could reach the Barkers, even if that were possible to-night.

So she picked her way down in the dark, carrying Baby pickaback, until she came to some rails, over which they got, and came into a thicket of wood, a very dark place undergrown with shrubs. They had lost the light now, but very soon came suddenly upon it again close to them; at which moment a large dog came out at them and began barking furiously.

"Don't be frightened, love," said Gerty to Baby; "it is only a sheep-dog; he won't hurt us." To the dog—"You'll catch it, sir. I'll give it to you, sir, and so I tell you. How dare you? Come here, sir; do you hear, come here this instant, and don't let me hear another word out of your head."

The dog came wagging his tail, and Gerty took him by the scruff of his neck and slapped him. "If you are in earnest with them, dear," she said, with that careful attention to the child's education which she had always shown, "you should have a tea-stick, and take them by the tail, raising their hind legs off the ground, so that they can't bite you, and lay on like old gooseberry. Now, dear, I will hold him; do you go into the hut, and say that Lady Hillyar is outside and wishes to be guided to Mr. Barker's. Come, that's a man."

Baby was very valiant. Gerty saw him advance boldly to the door, which

was ajar, push it open, and pass on into the well-lit room beyond.

CHAPTER LXIV.

SAMUEL BURTON GETS A FRIGHT.

SAMUEL BURTON was prospering amazingly. In addition to the plunder which he had netted from his dexterous robberies at Stanlake, he had made a great hit just latterly. He had bought a lot of twenty acres, with frontage, on the Erskine, for 200*l*. and now the Burnt Hut Copper Mining Company had, after a long wrangle, consented to pay him 2,300*l*. for it, that they might build the terminus to their tramway thereon.

Yet he was far from being more easy in his mind than heretofore. Had any one told the miserable desperate hound, who had sneaked into George Hillyar's office so few years ago, and borrowed thirty pounds of him, that he would have risen to such a height of prosperity, he would have laughed at him. But here he was, not only comfortable for life, but holding over Sir George Hillyar a power worth thousands a year to him: and yet he was getting desperate and ferocious.

He was a most awful scoundrel. There could be no doubt of that. It may be true that there is an average amount of crime to be committed in a certain number of years, and therefore it don't much matter how it is done or who does it, as a contemporary wittily put it the other day; yet still, if you would carry Buckleism to this extreme length, you will find that the little efforts after good, and the better instincts of the very worst men, are very well worth careful examination.

Now this utter scoundrel, Burton, for instance, had his good instincts. The man was good-natured and fond of children. He was grateful and generous, and, what is more to the purpose just now, his devotion to his supposed son Reuben was a passion with him. Sir George Hillyar had used him and abused him for his own ends, but he had retained a kind of dog-like faithfulness

towards that man, until he had stepped in between him and Reuben; and now, moping in solitude, or worse than solitude, his old love for Sir George was rapidly giving way to ferocious hatred. He felt sure, and he was right, that no one but Sir George Hillyar—who, as he knew, hated and distrusted him—could have stepped in between honest kindly Reuben and himself, and produced this estrangement.

His most affectionate appeals to Reuben had been left long unanswered, and now were only answered by letters shorter and colder time after time. Reuben had loved him once, and risked all for him; and the poor wretch, who had tried what *he* called religion, and had found that the lowest and wildest form of it enjoined a practice far, far beyond what was possible to him now, felt more and more every day, as his wasted life drew towards its close, the want of some one being who could care for him. Reuben would have cared for him, and tended him, and seen him kindly to the dark dreadful threshold, which, as he fully believed, was the threshold of everlasting torment. Hell, since his last feeble effort at reformation, he considered as certain; but there had been something left in this world; there had been Reuben's kind pleasant ministrations to the very end. Sir George, whom he had served so faithfully for good or evil, had stepped in, and taken this away.

In his lonely despair, he vowed a terrible vengeance. It was easy vowing; but how was he to execute it? A few months ago he might, as he thought, have struck the blow, by placing the will in Erne's hands, just at the time when Erne had been so kind to him; but, partly from some lingering reluctance to ruin his old master, partly from natural indecision, and partly from a sneaking miser-like love of possessing unused power, he had hesitated. And now Erne was gone South to die; nay, rumours had come that he was dead; and what was his precious will worth then?

And there was another thing which

terrified the poor wretch night and day. He was *afraid* of Sir George Hillyar, *physically* afraid. Give him a knife, and give any other man a cudgel, and he would face it out. In that case he had the courage of experience. But Sir George Hillyar was a bold man, the pupils of whose eyes would fix themselves steadily when he looked at you, and which pupils would suddenly dilate, just before the snarl and the blow came together, as the thunder snap and the lightning did, when the storm was directly overhead. And he was an unscrupulous man too ; so, sometimes, Samuel Burton would wake in the night in a perspiration of fear, and think that he heard George Hillyar moving towards him in the dark to murder him.

He would not sleep alone. But he had no friend in Romilly. He was known for a convict, and, although they treated him with civility, nay, with more than civility, they would have none of him. Tim Reilly, the (I was going to say, horse-stealer, but won't) — would have nothing at all to do with him. Tim had, like his great compatriot, O'Connell, driven a vast number of coaches and four through, at all events, one Act of Parliament—that against horse-stealing. Dan O'Connell had driven, or was prepared to drive, through the whole lot of them. He beat Tim O'Reilly in this respect, but Tim beat him in another ; Tim always stole the horses before he got on the box. But Tim had never been convicted, and would not lower himself by consorting with Samuel Burton.

It was mentioned before in these pages that, when he first invaded Cooksland, old Barker found an old convict shepherd, with a view to confining the criminal contamination within one single hut. Samuel Burton now, for want of another, got this old man to come and live with him ; and I need not say that, the longer he lived there, the more pleasant the old jail-slang became to him, and the more surely every spark of good in him got trampled out.

Still there were times, even now, when he would get ashamed of his life with this ribald old sinner, and think of the life he might lead with Reuben, as of something higher and purer, getting further and further from him every day.

One night they were sitting before the fire talking together.—Bah ! let us go to Tennyson—

“ Fear not thou to loose thy tongue,
Let thy hoary fancies free ;
What is loathsome to the young,
Savours well to thee and me.

Chaunt me now some wicked stave,
Till thy drooping spirits rise,
And the glowworm of the grave
Glimmer in thy rheumy eyes.”

Let us leave the conversation of two depraved old men alone. They were talking on together, each chuckle getting more fiendish than the last one, when the elder rose up and started back, with a frightful and savage oath ; and Samuel Burton staggered trembling against the wall, and leant there, with his face worked into an abject expression of the extremest terror.

For there stood between them a most beautiful child, with light waving hair like an angel's, dressed all in white. It stood full in the firelight, and its little hands were spread towards the blazing logs, as if in prayer.

CHAPTER LXV.

SAMUEL BURTON'S RESOLUTION.

THEN the man who had savagely cursed this beautiful and holy apparition as something godlike, and therefore utterly abhorrent to his nature—this man relapsed into moody, defiant silence : but the man who had only trembled before it, the man who could still feel terrified and abashed at the contrast between his own black soul and the sacred purity of the child before him—this man gained courage to advance towards it, and to speak tenderly and kindly to it.

Little George had knelt before the

fire, and was eagerly warming his hands, for the night was chill. Still the fancy held with Samuel Burton that the child was kneeling before a blazing altar, and praying for him.

"My dear," he said, "have you lost your way in the wood, and shall I take you home?"

"Mamma lost her way, and when the dog came out she beat it. Not so hard as Reuben beats the setters though, for it did not cry out."

"Who is Mamma, dear, and where is she?"

"I am cold, and I think I have wet my right foot in the wood. I want to warm my hands, and then I will remember the message and go back to her. She won't mind waiting while I warm my hands."

"Who is Mamma, dear? And you can remember the message while you warm your hands," said Samuel, with increasing interest.

"Oh, yes," said Baby, "I can remember. Mamma is Lady Hillyar. She is outside now, and she wants some one to take her up to Mr. Barker's."

"My dear," said Samuel Burton, eagerly kneeling beside the child, "do you know Reuben?"

"You silly man," laughed Baby; "of course I do."

"Where is Reuben, dear?"

"At Stanlake, of course. I must go back to Mamma."

"One word, dearest. Where is papa?"

"Papa is in Italy."

"Does papa never come to Stanlake? Does papa never see Reuben?"

"No, never. He never comes to Stanlake. I must go to Mamma, please; take me to Mamma."

Samuel had heard enough. He seized a candle, and rushed out of the hut, exclaiming aloud, with suddenly assumed excitement,

"Good heavens! Her ladyship alone in the bush, and the dew falling. Madam! My lady! For God's sake, answer! Where is your ladyship? Oh dear dear me!"

"Here I am," replied Gerty complacently, coming out of the darkness

with the sheep-dog leaping upon her; "I was wondering what was keeping the dear child so long."

"Dear! dear! your ladyship will have caught your death of cold. Pray walk in to the fire. Allow me as an old bushman to caution your ladyship against these October dews; though indeed, my lady, you should know the climate as well as I. I suppose Sir George has gone on to Mr. Barker's."

"Sir George is in Europe," answered Gerty. "But I wish you would take me up to Mr. Barker's, for I am tired, and they will be gone to bed. Hallo!" she continued, "turning to the older convict, "why there's old Ben! I thought you were shepherding for Mr. Barker. I ain't going to have your company up there, you know, and so I don't deceive you."

The old wretch gave a grin and growl, but Gerty turned away from him with calm contempt.

"I beg your ladyship's pardon," said Samuel, "but it is a good five miles to the station, and it would be almost too much for you to-night."

"I ain't going to stop here, you know," said Gerty. "Likely indeed!"

"But could not your ladyship go to the Burtons' for to-night? It is close by."

"You don't mean to tell me that they are here still. Why I thought they had found a mine and gone."

"They are living within two hundred yards, my lady. Only across the water. Will you follow me?"

She went out after him into the night air, and felt it strike deadly chill upon her. She thought of what Samuel had said about the heavy October dews, and thought she must have caught cold. She could scarcely follow Samuel, though he walked close before her. Baby had hold of her skirts, but she felt about in the darkness till she got his hand, and said: "It is only two hundred yards, dear, and we shall be among the Burtons. Thank God, it did not happen sooner."

They crossed a wooden bridge, and came into the street of the town, the

lights of which were dim in Gerty's failing eyes. Somehow, immediately after she was in a pretty drawing-room, and a group of people, who had hurriedly risen, were pressing towards her.

But she only saw Emma Burton, and she cried out to her, "Emma, dear, I am going to be ill; take care of Baby." Then there came over her in one moment a terrible recollection of her lone, solitary journey; a sudden appreciation of the enormous task she had so heedlessly undertaken; then one happy moment, in which she was conscious that she was safe; and then the brave, silly little woman, overdone in body and mind, became comfortably insensible, and was borne in a kind of triumph to bed by Mrs. Burton and Emma, and, waking up, found that she had caught a violent rheumatic cold, lost one of her shoes, and all capacity for thinking consecutively and reasonably.

She had trusted her old friend the Bush a little too far this time. As she very sensibly said, she was glad it did not happen before.

Samuel Burton went back to his cottage very fast. When he got back he found old Ben still smoking over the fire, who seemed inclined to resume the conversation where it was broken off; but Samuel told him savagely to shut up, and sat over the fire with his head buried in his hands.

So Reuben was alone at Stanlake. Now or never was his time. He determined to go to England to see Reuben. Reuben's mind had been poisoned against him by some one; perhaps by old Morton, the keeper. He would find Reuben, and make his story good to him, and would induce Reuben to live with him, and would work to make his fortune. He thought that he had possibly been unjustly suspicious of Sir George Hillyar. He was determined that Sir George Hillyar should have fair play. He would not meddle with Sir George in any way.

Meanwhile, with regard to Samuel Burton. If the child, when stretching out its hands towards the burning logs, had really been praying for mercy for

his father, he could hardly have done more to soften the heart of the man who held such terrible power over both of them. If he could only get Reuben, he would not behave vindictively towards him. Nay, supposing Erne to be really dead, what power had he? And this is remarkable. He could not decide whether Erne was dead or alive; for at one time he thought it impossible that he could have survived, which was perfectly reasonable, and, at another, his soul was filled with a superstitious, unreasonable belief that he was alive, and would return. He had divorced himself by instinct and practice from truth so long that he was utterly unable to examine evidence, and decide on probabilities. But he found that, whenever he believed Erne to be alive, his rancour against Sir George Hillyar increased, and, when he believed him dead, his feeling towards his old master grew more tender. As his intellect told him that his power of treating with his enemy grew less, so his heart grew more tender towards the enemy with whom he was about to treat. I suppose we should all feel somewhat in love with the Russians, and feel a deep admiration for their valour, their—(I don't know what else there is to admire in them, but we could find that out)—in case of our falling out with the Americans. When we found ourselves not in a position to fight them we should begin to feel affectionate towards them, and remember old Crimean courtesies, nay, contrast them, the Russians, favourably with our faithful allies the French. Now that Samuel Burton saw the power over his old master slipping through his hands, he began to care for him once more.

CHAPTER LXVI.

EX-SECRETARY OXTON GETS A LESSON.

"You must do me the credit to say, dear Mr. Oxtan," said the widow North, one evening at the Bend, "that I always hated Mr. O'Ryan most cordially. But I never believed him to be a fool—yes, I will say it, a fool—till now."

"You are quite sure he is one, then?" said Mr. Oxtou.

"Don't you think so yourself?" said the widow.

"No, I don't," said the secretary. "I always thought him wonderfully clever and able, but I never thought he would have made a statesman till now. No, I won't abuse the word 'statesman.' I never suspected that he had half as much political sagacity as he is showing."

"I am at a loss to understand you," said the widow.

"And I am not in a position to explain myself," said Mr. Oxtou, rising and laughing.

"You are very unkind and disagreeable," said the good-natured widow. "Aggy, don't you think that a simple mistake about the direction of a letter, could have been got over without your husband's having an hour's tête-à-tête with Miss Burke?"

"My dear Eleanor," said Mrs. Oxtou, "you are perfectly right. My husband's penchant for Miss Burke has caused me the deepest grief and anxiety for many years. It is a painful subject. Let us change the conversation."

"Well," said Mrs. North, laughing, "I won't try to sow dissension between man and wife, particularly as she is coming here to-night. I hate scenes."

"She will hardly come to-night, in the thunder-storm, will she?" said Joe. "How terrible the rain is!"

"Why, no; she cannot move in such weather as this," Mrs. Oxtou allowed, and they all agreed.

But presently, just after a blinding flash of lightning, her voice was heard in the hall; and they all crowded out to meet her.

She had got on a Mackintosh, and had tied a shawl over her bonnet so as completely to hide her face. She looked much more like a man than a woman on the whole, as she stood in the hall, with the wet pouring off her in streams; they only knew it was her by her voice.

"How could you venture out in such weather, my dear Lesbia?" began Mrs. Oxtou.

"Mr. Burton, your sister's come by

the stamer; but she's not gone home; she is up at my house, and stays there to-night. James Oxtou, I'll trouble ye for an audience in a hurry, alone wid yourself."

Mr. Oxtou took her into another room, and left the others wondering. The moment they were alone, and she had moved the shawl from her head, Mr. Oxtou saw she looked exceedingly grave.

"James, you may well wonder at my coming out such weather. I have got news which will make you look as grave as me."

"I know you have been doing something kind for me, old friend; I am sure of that."

"Nothing more than coming out in a thunder-storm, and I'd do more than that for ye. It's some one else ye're obliged to this time, my dear James. That angel, Emma Burton, who is not only ready and willing to devote her life and her health to any one who may need it, but by some divine kind of luck seems always in the way to do it—it's her you're obliged to this time."

"God bless her beautiful face, and soften her sorrow! I need not pray that she may have peace, for she has that peace which passes understanding. Now, old friend?"

"James, that scoundrel, Sir George Hillyar, has been neglecting Gerty."

"So I supposed, from having none of my letters answered, and from Gerty saying nothing of him."

"But it is worse than that."

"Has he gone off with another woman?"

"Yes."

"I did all I could to prevent it," said poor Mr. Oxtou. "What could I do more? He was a very good *parti* for her. How can any one blame me in this miserable business? No! no! I will not say that. I have been deeply to blame, and it will break my poor little Gerty's heart."

Miss Burke sat down on the floor and began to moan.

"Don't make me a scene, there's a dear old girl; I am not up to it. After

I let this miserable marriage take place, I should have kept him here. He might have been saved; who knows? Now, get up, Lesbia; you are getting too old to go on like this."

"Not till you know who he has gone off with!—not till you know who he has gone off with!"

"Who is it, then?" said Mr. Oxtan, turning sharply on her.

"Mary Nalder! Oh, the weary day, Mary Nalder!"

"Get up directly. How dare you?—In this house!—How dare you repeat such a wicked falsehood, Lesbia? How dare you believe it? She, indeed: and that fellow! Get up, instantly, and give me the name of the scoundrel who dared say such a thing. He shan't wait for Nalder's tender mercies. Get up, and tell me his name."

Miss Burke got up and went to him. "I wouldn't have believed it, James, but that the poor child told me herself not half an hour ago."

"What poor child?"

"Gerty. She has run away, and come by Melbourne, walking, and made her way to the Burtons at Port Romilly. And that saint of a girl has brought her on here, tending her like her own sister, and keeping her quiet."

"Gerty here!"

"Shoeless and worn out. Poor, simple child, she walked three hundred miles through the Bush; and, James—"

"Let me go to her. The scoundrel!—Aggy! Aggy!"

"Be quiet, James," said Miss Burke, rapidly and decisively. "Don't be a fool. The poor child is out of her mind, and don't know any one but Emma Burton. And you must keep Aggy from her, and you must not go near her yourself. For, James; come and hear a dear old friend quietly; the poor little thing's last craze is that you and Aggy are the cause of the whole mischief. Since you have spoken about Mary Nalder as roundly as you have, you have entirely restored my faith in her, and I beg her pardon for having been so wicked as to believe anything against her. But our own Gerty says, in her

madness, that it was you and Aggy who introduced Sir George and Mrs. Nalder at your own house, and that she will never endure the sight of either of you again. You must break this to Aggy, and you must leave her to me and to Emma Burton for the present."

So this was the end of this grand marriage, in which the Secretary had been led to acquiesce in an evil moment, disapproving of it in his heart the whole time. Even if he could not have stopped it in the first instance (as he certainly could) he need not, for the mere sake of a few odd thousands a-year, have committed the fatal fault of letting such a wild hawk as George Hillyar go down the wind, out of call, with such a poor little dove as Gerty for his only companion. And now here was Gerty come back, deserted, heart-broken, and mad, cursing him and his wife as the cause of all her misfortunes. And, although the dear little fool was wrong as to particulars, was she not right in the main? Mr. Oxtan was more humbled and saddened than he had been for many years. He had always had a most firm faith in the infallibility of his own sagacity, and this was the first great shock it had ever received; and the blow hit him the harder because it came through his heart. From this time forward he was less positive and dictatorial, less certain of his own conclusions. The careless Indian who spilt the pot of wourali poison over Humboldt's stocking was nearly depriving us of the "Kosmos;" and so little Gerty, who was as nearly cracked as any one of her extremely limited intellects can manage to be without the aid of hereditary predisposition, did by her curious Hegira manage to affect the course of affairs to a considerable extent; and that, too, without any accidental or improbable coincidence of time. She not only was the cause of Samuel Burton's going to England after Reuben, but her arrival, in the sad plight which we have described, had the effect on Mr. Oxtan mentioned above—made him more distrustful of foregone conclusions, and more open to negotiation.

But now. Mr. Oxton bent his head down on the table and wept. After a time he looked up again, and said, "The last time I cried, Lesbia, was when Charley Morton's father got the Latin verse prize, instead of me, at Harrow." Miss Burke was standing in her dripping mackintosh, with her head bare and her long black hair tangled down over her shoulders: with her back against the door, sentinel against intruders—patient, gentle, nay, almost servile; but with a fierce untamed power in her splendid physique, in her bold black eyes, and in her close set mouth; a true representative of a great nation subdued for three centuries, but never conquered. As Oxton saw that woman in her fantastic dress, with her wild tangled hair, standing against the door, a light seemed to break on him. "She is half a savage," he said to himself. "But is there a nobler woman in the colony? I have never done these people justice. These Irish *must* have more in them than I have ever given them credit for. I will try to think differently of them; I am not too old to learn."

CHAPTER LXVII.

SOMETHING TO DO.

It was well for poor Emma that she had the care of Gerty just now, for she was pretty nearly heart-broken. Night and day there was but one image before her mind's eye—Erne lying dead in the bush alone.

But the noble girl suffered in silence, and it was only her red eyes in the morning which told Joseph that she had been weeping all night long. They did not allude to the subject after that first dreadful evening; but, when three days were gone, she said she thought she would like to go to her brother James, and that the steamer sailed that day. Joseph was glad she should go, for her presence seemed like a reproach to him; and so she went her favourite voyage to her favourite brother.

They met in silence, but his silent embrace told her that he loved her only the more dearly in her sorrow, and she was contented. She begged to sleep at James's house, because all her brothers were away at school, and she thought she could sleep better if she had the baby. That night, just before she went across to her brother's house, her mother fell upon her bosom and began weeping wildly; but Emma could not speak of it yet—she only kissed her mother in silence.

In the middle of the night she came to James's room in infinite distress. "James, my dear," she said, "I shall go out of my mind alone if those native dogs keep howling. There is one of them again. How very, very dreadful."

There was something so terribly suggestive in her noticing the noise of these foul animals in this way, that it frightened James, and made him think too of his poor friend, lying—where? and how?

They found out that she brooded on this in silence all day long; for the next day, towards evening, she was sitting alone with her mother, and suddenly said—

"Mother! I suppose that, even if they were to find his body now, I should not recognise it."

"You will know him when you meet him in glory, my darling; among all the ten thousand saints in heaven you'll know him." This was all that weeping Mrs. Burton could find to say from her bursting heart.

For five days she was like this—not idle, not morose, only very silent. No wild dogs were heard after the first night; James confided to one or two of the leading young men that, under the circumstances, the native dogs were an annoyance to his sister. They took uncommonly good care that the girl who had nursed Tim Reilly's child through the small-pox should not be unnecessarily reminded that her sweetheart was lying dead in the bush. There was no more music from the dingoes after that.

So she remained for that time, never

weeping before the others, speaking very little, and only once or twice about Erne. Several times her brother James begged her to talk to him and ease her heart; but her answer was always the same—"Not yet, dear; not yet." Once he got her to walk out with him; but one of those foul, filthy, cruel, beautiful eagles came rushing through the forest like a whirlwind just over their heads, and she shut her eyes and stopped her ears, and begged James, for the love of God, to take her home again.

But on the fifth day God sent her relief, and all was well. He sent her work, and her eye grew clear and calm once more, and the deadly lethargy of grief was gone, never to return. The grief was there still; that never could depart any more until death; but God had sent her the only true remedy for it—the remedy which, acting on sainted souls like hers, destroys self, and therefore makes the wildest grief bearable. He sent her one "whose necessity was greater than her own"—like that of the soldier at Zutphen—and bade her forget herself, and see to this business for Him, and wait for her reward hereafter.

Gerty came to her, broken down in health, and mad, with her silly, crazed little head filled full of groundless suspicions against those who loved her best. Here was work for her with a vengeance. With a feeling of shame at what she chose to call her own selfish grief, she rose and shook it off. When Gerty had been got to bed, she came down to the assembled family, and at one glance they saw that their old Emma was come back to them.

"My dears," she said, "the steamer goes in four days. If I can get her out of that bed I shall take her to Palmerston. As far as her bodily health is concerned, she has only got a bad rheumatic cold. But I shall take her to Palmerston, to Miss Burke. She is not in her right mind exactly, and yet her pulse is quiet, and her eyes are not dilated. She has got a craze about the Oxtons, and—and—She must go to Miss Burke. I can't

undertake to do anything without Miss Burke. I shall take her to Palmerston on Thursday."

CHAPTER LXVIII.

THE BACKSTAIRS HISTORY OF TWO GREAT COALITIONS.

WHEN it was too late, Joseph Burton began to realize to himself the fact that he, by quietly and without remonstrance allowing his sister to devote her life to him, had ruined her life, and had committed a gross act of selfishness. The invalid of the family, among high-bred and high-minded people like the Burtons, is generally nursed and petted into a state of chronic selfishness. Joseph Burton, whose character we have hitherto taken from his brother, had in spite of his really noble instincts, been spoilt in this way, and hitherto had not thoroughly recovered that spoiling. Now he plunged into politics more wildly than ever, and made love to Mrs. North (who was by no means unwilling to have him make love to her: far from it); and tried to forget Erne's death and Emma's misery.

Mrs. North's question about the folly of Mr. O'Ryan seemed pertinent enough, but Mr. Oxtton's answer puzzled her exceedingly. Mr. O'Ryan had never concealed his longing for office and power; but, now he had got it, he seemed to be allowing his party to commit such extreme follies, as would put him in the Opposition once more within a twelvemonth. And yet Mr. Oxtton said that he had never before given him credit for any approach to political sagacity. She resolved to get her pretty head as near to Joseph Burton's handsome one as was proper, in a quiet window, on the first opportunity, and make him explain this mysterious speech of Mr. Oxtton's.

It wanted explanation, certainly; for, since the foundation of Donnybrook Fair (by King Malachi, or, as Mr. O'Callagan called him, Mellekee, "last of prophets, and first of kings and saints

in the Island of Saints"), seldom have the public affairs of any community been brought into such an extraordinary hurly-burly as that into which the O'Ryan ministry succeeded in bringing the affairs of Cooksland. And yet O'Ryan, who might have whipped his dogs in, and gained the respect of the colony, only laughed, and defended each absurdity by a quaint airy Palmerstonian speech, and let things take their course without the slightest concern.

The colony expected a land bill of him (and to tell the honest truth, a land bill was most imperatively necessary), but none was offered to the house by Mr. O'Ryan. He left that to his honourable and gallant friend and colleague, Mr. Rory O'More. And, when the provisions of that bill were laid before a paralyzed and awe-stricken House, even Mr. O'Callagan of the *Mohawk*, himself was obliged to confess that it was "a divyle of a bill, indeed, indeed, but, Faug a ballagh, we'd get some piece of it any how."

The chief points in the bill were, that all the waste lands were to be laid open for selection at 5s. an acre; that any person holding over eighty acres should pay a tax of 5s. per acre per annum; and that all the men who at present held more than eighty acres, should pay a tax of 2s. 6d. an acre; which last provision, he remarked, would so far recruit the resources of the colony (they would have taken nearly 3,000l. a year from Mr. Oxtan alone) as to enable them to reduce import duties, and materially diminish their staff of custom-house officers.

The House wouldn't have this at all—more particularly the gentlemen connected with the Customs (most of them Irish), who happened to sit in the House. The bill was rejected by a perfectly resignable majority; but there was not one single hint of resignation from Mr. O'Ryan. And the quidnunes of the colony began to remark that neither Mr. Oxtan, nor Mr. Dawson, in the Upper House, nor Mr. Dempsey in the Lower, were attending to their parliamentary duties, though all three in town.

Mr. Brallagan's new Constitution bill was of a still more astounding nature than Mr. Rory O'More's land bill. It was simply revolutionary. All property qualification was done away with; the Upper House abolished; and every male in the colony of twenty-one, untainted with crime, invested with a vote. Mr. O'Ryan spoke in favour of the bill for about three minutes, with an airy levity which disgusted every one. "You must come to it some day or another; ye'd better swallow it now. Whether the country's fit for it or not, it never will be more fit; besides, I have some sort of curiosity to see the thing at work. If we do go smash with it, the home government can step in; and, if we don't, why we can give the old lady her *congé*, cut the painter, and start for ourselves."

Joseph Burton rose after Mr. O'Ryan, and in a short, stinging speech denounced the insane folly of virtually putting the government of the country into the hands of the most unfortunate and most unthrifty of the old country. "With regard to one half of the emigrants now entering our ports," continued Joe, "I affirm that their mere presence in this colony proves them to be unable to manage their own affairs with any success. The result of conferring full political privileges on a thriftless, selfish, and idle population would be that the most worthless class would be legislated for, and that the other and more respectable classes, overpowered by numbers, would be neglected; that government would be forced by the demagogues to divert the revenue to unproductive works to create sham labour, and that there would arise a lazzaroni more pestilent than that of Naples."

Not a word did Joe utter against Mr. O'Ryan. The bill was lost by a large majority. One of the younger conservative members rose and gave notice of a motion of want of confidence. The day came and the vote was put; Mr. O'Ryan was victorious by three votes; and so public business came to a dead standstill. Only, the governor having politely remarked that he would be glad

of a little money on account, they made a House and voted him his salary. As for the rest of the budget, not the slightest effort was made to bring it in; forcing a budget of any kind through a house, with a majority of three, which might yet, on any day, in consequence of a hot wind, or the mail steamer coming in, or a steeple chase, or a missionary meeting, or a prizefight, or a thunderstorm, dwindle to a minority of nine, was too much trouble. Meanwhile affairs were come to a dead lock, and it was notorious that no funds were in hand for the payment of officials for more than two months.

When matters were just at this pass, it so happened that Mrs. North's pretty little carriage was conveying her quickly down Sturt Street, through the broiling summer noon; when she saw, walking rapidly on the pavement before her, a large white umbrella, with somebody's legs under it; at the sight of which she hailed her coachman, and made him pull up beside the pavement. The radiant face of Joseph Burton looked out from under the umbrella, and the widow perceived that "ex pede Herculem"—she had looked in his face so long and so earnestly, that now she could recognise him by the shape of his legs.

He looked so unutterably happy that his joy communicated itself to the kind little widow from the mere force of sympathy, leaving alone and not considering the fact that she was over head and ears in love with him. She was going to speak, when he anticipated her.

"Dear Mrs. North, will you drive me somewhere?"

She was going to say, "I will drive you anywhere if you will look at me like that!" but she didn't. She only said, "Jump in. Where?"

"The Bend."

"The Bend," cried out Mrs. North to the coachman. And away went "Lothario"—second-best trotter in the colony—like a steam-engine.

"What makes you look like this?" said Mrs. North, laying her hand on his arm; "have you good news?"

"News which has brought me to life, and made a man of me once more," said Joe. "I have carefully concealed it from you, my dear friend; but I have been in deep distress lately, and the cause of that distress is suddenly removed, and I could sing for joy."

Now Mrs. North was one of the most excellent and admirable little women alive. But she had got to love Joe, and she knew that Joe loved her. She also knew well Joe's ultra-sensitiveness about his deformity, and was well aware that he, with his intense pride, would never lay himself open to the chance of a refusal, would never speak until he knew he was safe; therefore she saw that she would have to do a great deal of a certain sort of work herself which is generally, by old custom and tradition, done by the gentleman, and yet do it in a way which should not in the slightest degree clash with Joe's exceedingly unpractical and book-gathered notions of womanly modesty.

And, if any one was to ask my opinion, I don't think the little woman was in the least to blame. One would not care to see it done by a girl of twenty: but a widow of twenty-six is quite a different matter. I think she acted wisely and well all through.

She withdrew her hand from Joe's arm. "Were you blind enough, and foolish enough, to think that you could conceal it from me?" That was all she said.

Joe began, "My dear Mrs. North——" but she interrupted him.

"Come," she said, "we will talk of something else. Like most other men, you can be good-natured, even while you are bitterly unkind. After such a strong instance of the latter, just merely for a change, give me a specimen of the former, and explain this political complication which puzzles us all so."

"Dear Mrs. North," said Joe, in distress, "don't embitter the happiest day in my life by being unkind to me."—The widow's hand immediately went back on to his wrist, and she said, eagerly, "My dear Mr. Burton——"

"There, I knew you were not seriously

angry," said Joe, with a brightened face. "Come, I will soon explain the state of affairs, which is so puzzling to the outsiders."

"But are you sure, dear Mr. Burton," said this conscientious and high-souled widow, "that you are violating no confidence? Oh! if you were to render yourself for one moment uneasy by having reposed, in a moment of excitement, confidence in me, the recollection of which would hereafter render you unhappy, I should never, never——"

"I shall keep no secrets from you in future," said Joe, solemnly. Which the widow thought was getting on pretty well, considering.

The dead-lock in public affairs, as described by Joe, in a delicious drive through shade and sunlight, towards the Bend, was simply this. (It is not hard to understand, and will not take long):—

O'Ryan had been a thorough-going ultra-Republican, a man who believed that the summit of human happiness, and of political sagacity, would consist in putting supreme power into the hands of the majority, and letting them settle their own destinies, without taking into account whether or no a population so peculiarly formed as that of Cooksland, were in the least capable of knowing what was best for them, or of electing the men who could.

His innumerable good qualities, his undoubted talents, his great powers of debate gave him, most justly, the entire confidence of his party. He could, most probably, when he first found himself in power, through the fatal folly of James Oxtan, have got through a new constitution bill—so liberal, that all backward steps would have been impossible, as it would seem they have become in Victoria; and the carrying out of his extreme theories would have followed shortly as a matter of course. But, before this happened, two persons had been acting on his somewhat facile and plastic nature, and had modified his opinions considerably.

The first of these was Dempsey, the Irish rebel, the greatest anomaly from

the island of bulls—a man so good, so pure in life, so unselfish, and so high-minded, that there were times when one was ashamed that he should bow to one; a man who had shown such great political ability, when he was once removed from his craze of independent Irish nationality; and yet a man who, in his frantic effort in 1848, had shown that he was less able to calculate on the earnestness of the peasants, and the power of the Government, than Smith O'Brien or Duffy;—a man who ought to have been respected and loved by everyone for his good qualities, or shot like a mad dog. You never knew whether the former or the latter fate was the right one for him.

This man had a restless craving after power; but since '48 he had learnt what real power was, and saw that it was impossible to enjoy it with such gentlemen as Mr. O'More, and Mr. Brallagan, or with such an organ as the *Mohawk*, and longed to find himself back again among his peers, to have his share of power with the Oxtons and the O'Reillys—to regain the ground he had lost, by what he now thought a wicked and inconsiderate rebellion against a government which, however misguided, was generous and kind. Moreover, though he had been a rebel, he had never been a Republican. This man, both because he was a relation, and because his eminence was undoubted, had a great deal of influence over O'Ryan, and used it in favour of moderation.

Another person who had great power over him was an old friend, Miss Burke, the peacemaker. She had the profoundest contempt for men of the Brallagan school—men with no qualities worth naming except fierce and noisy impudence, and a profound belief in their own powers. She took care that this contempt should never die out of her cousin's bosom, and certainly few people possessed greater powers of sarcasm than she. No one was ever more able to make any one else contemptible and ridiculous.

Acted on by these people, O'Ryan grew more and more tired of his "tail,"

and more and more anxious to ally his own talents and those of the pick of his party to the other talents of the colony, and form a sound, respectable, moderately liberal government. But what was to be done with the "tail?" To announce without preparation a coalition from which they were excluded, would be to whistle "Vinegar Hill" at a Tipperary fair.

"Hang it," he said, laughing, one day to Dempsey, "I have committed myself to these men, and I can't back out. I will give them an innings. Let them exhibit their statesmanship before the country; they will be easier to deal with afterwards."

He did so. With what result we know. Negotiations had been set on foot for a coalition; and the negotiators had been Miss Burke and Joseph Burton.

Everything had gone smoothly until Mr. Dempsey was brought on the carpet. James Oxton had gracefully met O'Ryan half way, and O'Ryan had yielded with great good sense. But, when Mr. Dempsey's name was mentioned, Mr. Oxton peremptorily told Joseph Burton that he would sit in no cabinet with a gentleman who had been in arms against Her Majesty's authority; and O'Ryan with equal firmness instructed Miss Burke to say that he must decline forming part of any ministry which did not include his friend Dempsey.

"This was the knot all yesterday, dear friend," said Joseph; "but it is so nobly untied. Dempsey has deputed me to say to Mr. Oxton that the matter in hand is far nearer to his heart than any personal ambition could be—that he foregoes all his claims, and will earnestly support the new ministry from the back benches."

"Noble fellow!" cried Mrs. North. "And is it this which has made you so happy?"

"Oh, no; something far different."

"Here we are," said eager Mrs. North, as the carriage dashed quickly into the gravelled court-yard, setting the cockatoos screaming, and bringing all the dogs out at them by twenty vomitories. "I will

wait and take you back with your answer. Make haste."

Joe was not long gone. "Drive straight to Mr. Dempsey's at the Stockade," he cried. "My dear creature! at length it is all over and done."

"What did Mr. Oxton say?"

"He said, 'Go, if you please, and tell Mr. Dempsey that I am not to be outdone in nobleness by him or any other man. Say that I request him to sit in the cabinet with us, as a personal favour, and hope to sit there many years with one who has learnt so well, in whatever school, to sacrifice his own ambition for the public good.'"

"You and Lesbia deserve the thanks of every man and woman in the colony. I am proud of your acquaintance. You are to have a seat in the cabinet, of course?"

"Yes, I am to be Minister of Education."

She was looking at him when he said the last three words, and saw that, for the first time, he fully appreciated the grandeur of the position to which he had found himself elevated. As he said the words "Minister of Education," his face flushed and the pupils of his eyes expanded. "That is well," thought Mrs. North. "I wonder if he means to speak."

Apparently he meant to hold his tongue, for he did it. There was a long silence, during which Joe twice turned towards her, and twice turned away. "I suppose I must do it myself, then, after all," thought Mrs. North.

"Ah me!" she said in a sweet low voice; "I suppose I shall see but little of the Minister of Education: you will have but little spare time for my tittle-tattle now. However, the past is our own. You can never deprive me of the recollection of the pleasant talks we have had together; and at all events I can watch your career from a distance. I shall have that pleasure, at all events."

"Mrs. North," began Joe. "If I was not a cripple——" here he stopped again.

Dead silence on the part of Mrs. North.

"If I was not a cripple, I should ask you if I might dare——"

Mrs. North's little hand was gently laid on Joe's.

"Mary, I love you."

"And I love you, Joseph. And I will prove it to you between this and the grave, if God spares me."

"Propose to him myself, dear?" said Mrs. North to Mrs. Oxtan next day.

"No, my dear, I assure you on my word of honour that I was not driven so far as that. But I should have done so in ten minutes more, dear; and so I don't deceive you."

To be continued.

MASR-EL-KAHIRA.

(CAIRO.)

Extracted from the Letters of Lady Duff-Gordon.

WELL may the Prophet (whose name be exalted) smile when he looks down on Cairo! It is a golden existence, all sunshine and poetry, and, *I* must add, kindness and civility.

As I ride along on my valiant donkey, led by the stalwart Hassan, and attended by Omar, I constantly exclaim, "Oh, if our Master were here, how pleased he would be!" (Husband is not a correct word.) How you would revel in old Masr-el-kahira, peep up at lattice-windows, gape like a "Rashein" (green one) in the bazaar, go into raptures in the mosques, laugh at portly Turks and dignified sheyks on their white donkeys, drink sherbet in the streets, ride wildly about on a donkey, peer under black veils at beautiful eyes, and feel generally intoxicated! Omar is enchanted at the idea that the "Sidi-el-kebbri" (the great Master) might come. Mashallah! how our hearts would be dilated!

The street in which I live and the neighbours would divert you. Opposite lives a Christian dyer, who must be a seventh brother of the admirable barber: he has the same impertinence, loquacity, and love of meddling with everybody's business. I long to see him thrashed, though he is a constant comedy. The Arabs next-door, and the Levantines opposite, are quiet enough; but how do they eat all the cucumbers they buy of the man who cries them every morning as "fresh gathered by sweet girls in the garden with the early dew?"

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The more I see of the back slums of Cairo, the more in love I am with them. The dirtiest lane of Cairo is far sweeter than the best street of Paris. Here there is the dirt of negligence, and the dust of a land without rain, but nothing disgusting; and decent Arabs are as clean in their personal habits as English gentlemen. As to the beauty of Cairo, that no words can describe: the oldest European towns are tame and regular in comparison; and the people are so pleasant! If you smile at anything that amuses you, you get the kindest, brightest smiles in return; they give hospitality with their faces; and if one brings out a few words, "Mashallah! what Arabic the Sitt Ingleez speaks!"

The Arabs are clever enough to understand the amusement of a stranger, and to enter into it, and are amused in turn, and they are wonderfully unprejudiced. When Omar explains to me their views on various matters, he adds, "The Arab people think so; I not know if right."* And the way in which the Arab merchants worked the electric telegraph, and the eagerness of the Fellahs for steam-ploughs, are quite extraordinary. They are extremely clever and nice children, easily amused, and easily roused into a fury, which lasts five minutes and leaves no malice; and half the lying and cheating of which they are accused comes from misunderstanding and ignorance. The Arabs see us come here and do what only their greatest Pashas

do—hire a boat to ourselves,—and of course think our wealth boundless. The lying is mostly from fright. They dare not suggest a difference of opinion to a European, and lie to get out of scrapes which blind obedience has often got them into. As to the charges of shopkeepers, that is the custom; and the haggling, a ceremony you must submit to. It is for the purchaser or employer to offer a price and fix wages—the inverse of the custom—Europe. If you inquire the price, they ask for something fabulous at random.

I have attached an excellent donkey, and his master, a delightful Hassan, to my house. They live at the door, and Hassan cleans the stairs and goes errands during the heat of the day; and I ride out very early, at six or seven, and again at five. The air is delicious now: it is very hot for a few hours, but not stifling; and the breeze does not chill one, as it does at Alexandria. I live all day and all night with open windows, and the plenty of fresh warm air is the best of remedies. I can do no better than stay here till the heat becomes too great.

The fault of my lodging is the noise. We are on the road from the railway, and there is no quiet except in the few hot hours when nothing is heard but the cool tinkle of the Sakha's brass cups as he sells water in the street, or perchance "Erksoos"—liquorice water,—or carob and raisin sherbet. The "erksoos" is rather bitter, and very good; I drink a great deal of it, for drink we must. A "gulleh" of water is soon gone. A "gulleh" is a wide-mouthed porous jar, and Nile water drunk out of it, without the intervention of a glass, is delicious. My lodging is very clean and nice, but quite like a French apartment, except the kitchen and other domestic arrangements, which are Arab. Omar goes to market every morning with a donkey (I went once too, and was much amused), and cooks, and in the evening goes out with me, if I want him. I told him I had recommended him highly, and hoped he would get good employment when I left; but he declares that he will

go with no one else so long as I come to Egypt whatever the difference of wages may be. "The bread I eat with you is sweet!" he said; a pretty little unconscious antithesis to Dante.*

One must come to the East to understand absolute social equality. As there is no education, and no reason why the donkey-boy who runs beside me may not become a great man, and as all Muslims are *ipso facto* equal, money and rank are looked on as mere accidents; and my *savoir vivre* was highly thought of, because I sat down with Fellaheen, and treated every one alike, as they treat each other. In Alexandria all that is changed; the European ideas and customs have nearly extinguished the Arab, and those which remain are not improved by the contact. Only the Beddawee preserve their haughty *nonchalance*.

I dined one day with Omar, or rather I ate at his house, for he would not eat with me. His sister-in-law cooked a most admirable dinner, and every one was delighted. It was an interesting family circle. There was a very respectable elder brother, a confectioner, whose elder wife is a black woman,—a really remarkable person. She speaks Italian perfectly, and gave me a great deal of information, and asked very intelligent questions. She ruled the house, but as she had no children, he had married a fair

¹ It is an act of justice, not only to this most faithful and devoted servant, but to the race to which he belongs, to say that Omar's professions have been far more than fulfilled. The passage quoted above was written in May, 1863, just before the writer's departure for England. During her absence, more than double the wages she gave him were offered by an English lady, but he refused without hesitation. He said his poor lady was ill—that it was his duty to take care of her, and that he should never be able to pray to Allah again if he deserted her. Omar is still with her, and is still doing all that can be done by faithful, affectionate, and intelligent service, to mitigate the sufferings of illness and banishment. The letters from which these passages are extracted contain such proofs of disinterested and loyal attachment and deep sense of religious obligation on the part of this Arab, as are not extremely common among men of his class, even in this Christian and civilized country.—S. A.

gentle-looking Arab woman, who had five children, and all lived in perfect harmony. Omar's wife is a fine handsome girl of his own age, with very good manners, but close on her lying-in, and looking fatigued. She had been outside the door of the close little court which constituted the house, *once* since her marriage. I now begin to understand all about the "manners and customs" of the women. There is a good deal of chivalry in the sentiments of the men concerning them, in some respects, and, in the respectable lower and middle classes, the result is not so bad. I suspect that among the rich few are very happy, but I don't know them, or anything of the Turkish ways. I will go and see the black woman again, and hear more; her conversation was really interesting.

My old washerwoman sent me a fervent entreaty through Omar, that I would dine with her one day, since I had made Cairo delightful by my return. If one will only devour these people's food, they are enchanted—they like that much better than a present; so I will "honour her house" some day. Good old Hannah! she is divorced for being too fat and old, and replaced by a young Turk, whose family sponge on Hayji Ali, and are condescending.

The other day when I went to deposit my cooking things and boat-furniture at her house, about eight or ten Arab women, seeing me arrive on my donkey, followed by a cargo of household goods, thronged round, delighted with the idea that I was coming to live in their quarter, and offering me neighbourly services. Of course all rushed upstairs, and my washerwoman was put to a great expense in pipes and coffee.

There is a quarrel now in the street; how they talk and gesticulate! and everybody puts in a word. A boy has upset a cake-seller's tray. "Nal-abuk!" (curse your father!) He claims six piastres damages, and every one gives an opinion, *pro* or *contra*. We all look out of the windows. My opposite neighbour, the pretty Armenian woman, leans out (baby sucking all the time),

and her diamond head-ornaments and earrings glitter as she laughs like a child. The Christian dyer is also very active in the row, which, like all Arab rows, ends in nothing;—it evaporates in fine theatrical gestures and a deal of talk. Curious! in the street they are so noisy; and set the same men down in a coffee-shop, or anywhere, and they are the quietest of mankind. Only one man ever speaks at a time—the rest listen, and never interrupt; twenty men do not make the noise of three Europeans.

Nothing is more striking to me in Egypt than the way in which one is constantly reminded of Herodotus. Both the Christianity and the Islam of this country are full of the ancient practices and superstitions of the old worship. The sacred animals have all taken service with Muslim saints: at Minieh, one of them reigns over crocodiles; higher up, I saw the hole of *Æsculapius'* serpent at Gebel Sheyk Houdee; and I fed the birds who used to tear the cordage of boats which refused to feed them, and who are now the servants of Sheyk Nooneh, and still come on board by scores for the bread which no Rais dares refuse them. Bubartis' cats are still fed in the Cadi's court in Cairo at the public expense, and behave with singular decorum when the "servant of the cats" serves their dinner. Among gods, Amun Ra, the sun god and serpent-killer, calls himself Maree Girgis (St. George), and is worshipped by Christians and Muslims in the same churches; and Osiris holds his festivals as notoriously as ever at Tanta, in the Delta, under the name of Seyd-el-Beddawee. The Fellah women offer sacrifices to the Nile, and walk round ancient statues, in order to have children.

These are a few of the ancient things—and in domestic life are numbers more. The ceremonies at births and burials are not Muslim, but ancient Egyptian. The women wail the dead, as on the old sculptures; all the ceremonies are pagan, and would shock an Indian Mussulman as much as his objection to eat with a Christian shocks an Arab. This country

is a palimpsest, in which the Bible is written over Herodotus, and the Koran over that. In the towns the Koran is most visible; in the country, Herodotus. I fancy this is most marked and most curious among the Copts, whose churches are shaped like the ancient temples; but they are so much less accessible than the Arabs that I know less of their customs.

In Cairo, of course, one is more reminded of the beloved "Arabian Nights;"—indeed, Cairo is the "Arabian Nights." I knew that Christian dyer who lives opposite to me, and is always wrangling, from my infancy; and my delightful servant Omar Abu-el Hallowa (the father of sweets), is the type of all the amiable *jeunes premiers* of the stories. I am privately of opinion that he is Bedredeen Hassan; the more as he can make cream tarts, and there was no pepper in them. Cream tarts are not very good; but lamb stuffed with pistachio-nuts fulfils all one's dreams of excellence. And dates and Nile water! they are excellent indeed, especially together, like olives and wine.

Two beautiful young Nubian women visited me in my boat, with hair in little plaits finished off with lumps of yellow clay, burnished like golden tags, soft deep bronze skins, and lips and eyes fit for Isis and Athor. Their very dress and ornaments were the same as those represented in the tombs; and I felt inclined to ask them how many thousand years old they were. In their house, I sat on an ancient Egyptian couch with the semicircular head-rest, and ate and drank out of crockery which looked antique; and they brought me dates in a basket such as you see in the British Museum, and a mat of the same sort. At Assouan (Juvenal's distant Syene, where he died in banishment) I dined on the shore with the "blameless Ethiopians—" merchants from Soudan, black as ink and handsome as the Greek Bacchus.

Most ancient of all, though, are the Copts; their very hands and feet are the same as those of the Egyptian statues.

Last Sunday I went to a Coptic church where I saw a procession carry-

ing babies three times round it. It was a living copy of one in the temple of Athor, at Dendera. The two priests carried, one a trident-shaped candlestick, the other cymbals, which he clashed furiously; and then they unbound certain mystic fillets, which they had tied round the children at baptism, and I received a cake of bread which was certainly baked for Isis. I was most kindly received by a Copt merchant at Sioot, and am to spend a week at his harem if ever I go up the Nile again; everywhere his relations welcomed me and gave me provisions. But, generally, they are a close, reserved people, and acknowledge no connexion with other Christians. They have been so repudiated by Europeans that they are doubly shy of us. The Europeans resent being called "Nazarene," as a genteel Hebrew gentleman may shrink from "Jew." But I said boldly, "I am a Nazarene, praise be to God!" and I found that this was much approved by the Muslims as well as the Copts.

Curious things are to be seen here as to religion: Muslims praying at the tomb of Maree Girgis (St. George), and the resting places of Sittima Mariam and Seyidna Issa (the Virgin and the Infant Jesus), and miracles bran-new of an equally mixed description.

Next Friday is the great Bairam, the day of ascending Mount Arafat at Mecca, and every one is buying sheep and poultry in preparation for it. I kill a sheep, and Omar will cook a stupendous dish for the poor Fellaheen, who are lying about the railway-station waiting to be taken to work somewhere. That is to be my Bairam, and Omar hopes for great benefit to me from the process.

Next month is the Moolid-el-Nebbee, the feast of the Prophet, and I hope to see that too. I have been very fortunate in seeing a great deal here, and getting to know a good deal of the family life. I have been especially civilly treated by dervishes and pious people, who might reasonably have cursed me. Even a tremendous saint, a renowned Fakeer, received me with the greatest distinction, and my crew were delighted, and

prophesied great blessings for me. He had sat naked and motionless for twenty years on one spot, and looked like the trunk of an old tree; but he had no pious cares, and was rather jocose.

— is my near neighbour, and he comes in and we talk over the government. His heart is sore with disinterested grief for the sufferings of the people. "Don't they deserve to be decently governed, and to be allowed a little happiness and prosperity? they are so docile, so contented; are they not a good people?" Those were his words as he was recounting some new iniquity. Of course, half these acts are done under pretext of improving and civilizing; and the Europeans applaud and say, "Oh, but nothing could be done without forced labour!" and the poor Fellahs are marched off in gangs like convicts, and their families starve, and (who would have thought it?) the population keeps diminishing. No wonder their cry is, "Let the English Queen come and take us!"

I don't see things quite as the English generally do; but mine is another *Standpunkt*, and my heart is with the Arabs. I care less about opening up the trade with the Soudan, and all the new railways, and I should like to see person and property safe, which no one's is here—Europeans of course excepted. Ismail Pasha got the Sultan to allow him to take 90,000 feddans of uncultivated land for himself, as private property. Very well. But the late Viceroy granted, eight years ago, certain uncultivated lands to a good many Turks, his *employés*, in hopes of founding a landed aristocracy, and inducing them to spend their capital in cultivation. They did so, and now Ismail takes

their improved land, and gives them feddan for feddan of his new land (which it will take five years to bring into cultivation) instead. He forces them to sign a *voluntary* deed of exchange, or they go off to Fozogo—a hot Siberia, whence none return. I saw a Turk the other day who was ruined by the transaction.

What chokes me is, to hear Englishmen talk of the stick being "the only way to manage Arabs," as if any one could doubt that it is the easiest way to manage any people; where it can be used with impunity.

If you have any power over an artist, send him to paint here; no words can describe either the picturesque beauty of Cairo or the splendid forms of the people in Upper Egypt, and, above all, in Nubia. I was in raptures at seeing how superb an animal man (and woman) really is; my donkey-girl at Thebes, dressed like a Greek statue, "Word es Sham" (the rose of Syria) was a feast to the eyes; and here too, what grace and sweetness! and how good is a drink of Nile water out of an amphora held to your lips by a woman as graceful as she is kindly! "May it benefit thee!" she says, kindly smiling with her beautiful teeth and eyes.

As to interest and enjoyment, I don't think Italy or Greece can equal the sacred Nile, the perfect freshness of the gigantic buildings, the beauty of the sculptures, and the charm of the people.

But the days of the beauty of Cairo are numbered: the superb mosques are falling to decay, the exquisite lattice-windows are rotting away and replaced by European glass and *jalousies*. Only the people and the government (in spite of a little Frankish varnish here and there) remain unchanged. L. D. G.

CO-OPERATION IN THE SLATE QUARRIES OF NORTH WALES.

BY PROFESSOR J. E. CAIRNES.

THE public must now be tolerably familiar with the story of the Rochdale Equitable Pioneers, and of the numerous societies, founded upon the same prin-

ciples which, in various parts of the country, have already accomplished such great things for the working people, and given earnest for the future of still greater

achievements in their behalf. It has heard something also of other and more genuine examples of "co-operation,"—where associates not only trade but "work" together, where the labourers are also the capitalists, and wages and profits return to the same hands—experiments which, small as have been the actual fruits they have hitherto yielded, form yet, in the opinion of those who have most deeply pondered the problem of industrial reform, the most solid grounds of hope for the future permanent elevation of the labouring class.¹ But there is, besides these, a third species of "co-operation," prevailing throughout some large industries in Great Britain, which has not, so far as I am aware, received any consideration in the numerous and instructive discussions which have within the last few years taken place upon this subject, but which is nevertheless well worthy of attention. I refer to the method of employing labour which prevails extensively in mining and other analogous occupations, and is known as the "bargain" or "contract" system. Having lately had an opportunity of witnessing this system in the slate quarries of North Wales, I will describe briefly the method and its results. It will, I think, be seen that it is a genuine instance of "co-operation"—one, moreover, which exhibits the beneficial tendencies of that plan, in some respects in even a more striking light than other and better known examples.

The mountains of North Wales, as is well known, constitute the principal source of the wealth of that region. They are extremely metalliferous, containing lead and copper ore, besides sulphur; but their most important constituent is the slate formation. Veins of this rock, varying in thickness from four and five, to four and five hundred, yards, and traceable, in some instances, for a length of many miles, traverse the country, but more especially the

mountain ranges of Carnarvon and Merioneth. The importance of the industry to which they give occasion may be judged from the fact, that three slate quarries—those of Penrhyn, Llanberis, and Festinog—give employment to not fewer than 7,000 men, representing a population of perhaps 20,000 persons. These are, indeed, by much the principal of the slate quarries in that region, but they form but a small fraction of the whole number. It is impossible to wander in any direction over the mountains of those two counties without finding abundant evidence how widely the popular enterprise is engaged in this branch of production. No mountain side is so inaccessible that the slate prospector has not reached it, and the most secluded glens and passes are heard to echo the thunder of the quarrier's blast.

The great majority of the slate quarries are worked by companies—either private co-partneries or joint stock companies; but a few, and notably the two largest—the quarries of Penrhyn and Llanberis—are in the hands of individuals, the proprietors of the mountains where the slate-formation occurs. In the former case the capitalist or capitalists working the quarry pay a royalty, which is generally one-twelfth of the produce. It must be observed that the slate does not, as is frequently supposed, and as might be inferred from a cursory glance at a slate quarry, constitute the mass of the mountain in which the quarry is cut. It runs in distinct veins which, on rising towards the surface, deteriorate—a circumstance to which is due the risk which this mode of employing capital so largely involves; for it is always difficult to say from the appearance of the vein at the surface what may be its quality at a lower depth. Before this can be known, a mass of from two or three to sometimes twenty or even thirty yards in vertical depth must be removed—a tedious and costly operation, which must be completed before slate-quarrying, properly so called, begins, and which is often performed to no purpose; the quality of the rock, when thus ascertained, not

¹ See an article of great interest in the *Westminster Review* for April, 1864, entitled, "Strikes and Industrial Co-operation," in which the whole subject is handled with remarkable ability and knowledge.

proving such as to justify the further prosecution of the work. Cases have been mentioned to the writer of quarries having been abandoned after 20,000*l.*, of others having been given up after 80,000*l.* had been expended on preliminary operations. This incident of slate-quarrying serves to explain what will be presently referred to—the unwillingness of the working quarriers to embark their savings in this kind of speculation.

The business of making slates is an exceedingly simple operation—one, however, which not the less demands from the workman no small amount of intelligence, exactness, and dexterity, besides a good deal of practical acquaintance with the nature of the materials with which he has to deal. It consists in detaching the slate formation in blocks from the mountain side; in sawing the blocks when thus detached into suitable sizes; lastly, in splitting and dressing, so as to bring them into proper shape—a process which is performed sometimes by machinery, but more generally by hand labour. It is to the industrial arrangements by which this operation is carried out that it is desired now to invite the reader's attention. They are as follows:—The portion of the slate which it is proposed to work is divided into sections carefully marked out, which are let out as "bargains" to as many small co-partneries, consisting generally of three or four working men. These co-partneries "contract" to produce slates—each from the section of the rock assigned to it—according to sizes and shapes at so much per thousand. The men who take part directly in these contracts form, perhaps, a third of the whole quarrying population; they are, as might be expected, the older, more experienced, and better-off portion of it; the remainder are employed by them as labourers at fixed wages under the name of "germyns," apparently the Welsh equivalent for "navvies." The capital employed in the undertaking is furnished principally by the proprietors or lessees, as the case may be, of the quarry; but a portion is also provided by the "contractors." Thus the former supply the

larger and more expensive machinery, such as the tramways, waggons, steam-engine, if there be one, pumps, slate-saws and planes, &c. while the latter furnish the smaller tools, as well as the gunpowder used in blasting. The practice, moreover, being to pay wages monthly, this supposes, on the part of the workmen—unless so far as they may have recourse to the pernicious aid of the tally-shop—an amount of saving sufficient, at least, to support them during this interval of delay. The relations of the actual workers having been established on this footing, and the contracts entered into, the functions of the principal capitalist or capitalists are thenceforward of an extremely limited kind; they consist chiefly in keeping the machinery in proper order, and seeing to the number and quality of the slates turned out. As for the rest—the plan of operations adopted, the distribution of the labour, its superintendence and reward—of all this the "contractors" undertake the sole and entire charge. It should be added that the "contracts" are supplemented by an understanding, doubtless originating in the felt necessity of mitigating for the working men the inevitable risks of such undertakings, to the effect that, where from the inferior quality of the rock, as ascertained on trial, the returns fall below a certain standard, the reduced earnings of the "contractors" shall be aided by a "poundage," or additional allowance, varying inversely with the amount of their gains. This poundage, so far as I could make out, though for the most part regulated by custom, is also in some degree discretionary on the part of the owner of the quarry, and is not the same for all districts. It applies, however, only to the less fortunate class of "bargains;" the better "bargains" are amply remunerated within the terms of the contract.

Such, in brief, are the arrangements under which industry in the Welsh slate quarries is carried on. I think it will be seen at once that this "contract system" constitutes a true case of "co-operation." It is at least certain that

it fulfils what I venture to think are the most important conditions of that method of industry: there is associated effort; there is common interest in the results of the work; and these results depend, subject to the natural conditions of the case, and the customary qualification of the strict contract just indicated, directly on the energy, skill, and mutual good faith with which the workers perform their part. It has also been said that the "contractors" advance a portion of the capital; but I should not be disposed to attach much importance to this as a distinctive feature of the "contract system;" for, though as a matter of fact the men who take part in contracts have generally accumulated some little capital, and though this circumstance no doubt facilitates in some degree their proceedings in carrying out the undertaking, still the possession of capital does not by any means constitute an indispensable condition to becoming a contractor, it being always easy for a man of good character to obtain the requisite tools and materials on credit from small shopkeepers established in the quarrying districts, and established chiefly with a view to supplying such needs. The only item of capital which in practice the contractor is in the habit of advancing is the money expended on his own support during the monthly interval that elapses before the returns to his industry come in; and, so far as this is concerned, the "germyrn" whom he employs—a labourer at fixed wages—has an equally valid title to take rank as a capitalist; the earnings of the "germyrn" being also postponed for the same period of time. The value of the experiment, therefore, and that which entitles it to be regarded as an example of "co-operative" industry, lies, in my opinion, in the other conditions to which I have referred—in the fact that the system enlists working men in a joint undertaking, of which the results for them depend in large part on the skill, energy, and conscientious zeal with which it is carried through.

And now let us endeavour to appre-

ciate the bearing of these conditions on the well-being of the quarrying community. We shall consider in the first place the position of the contractor, who, as I have already said, represents about a third of the whole quarrying population. He will not, of course, for a moment be confounded with the important and generally wealthy personage by whom our railways and great public works are carried on. The latter, a capitalist pure and simple, has no other relations with the actual workers than that of paymaster. But the contractor of the slate quarries is himself a manual worker—generally, indeed, a skilled worker, taking to himself the more difficult processes of the undertaking, but still in the strictest sense a working man—working in the same place, and often at the same operation, as the labourer whom he employs, and socially in no respect his superior. But, though a manual labourer, our contractor is also something very different from the ordinary labourer for hire. His remuneration is no fixed sum, but depends upon the success of his exertions, which he has therefore the strongest interest to increase to the utmost. Nor, again, is he to be confounded with the labourer at task-work. In the first place, the undertaking in which he embarks is of an altogether more important character than any that falls to the lot of the ordinary task-work labourer. Before he commits himself to his engagements, a calculation, not altogether free from complication—requiring, besides an acquaintance with arithmetic, and a tincture of mathematics, some practical knowledge of the different qualities of certain rocks—must be performed. Then the undertaking itself comprises several distinct operations—quarrying, cleaving, dressing—the carrying out of which, effectively and economically, calls for deliberation, forethought, and organising skill. Again, the contractor, while a labourer himself, is also a purchaser of the labours of others, holding towards his "germyrn" the position of a capitalist proper, and is thus led to look at the business of production in

some degree from the point of view of an employer—a circumstance which may go some way in accounting for the noteworthy fact, that in the districts of the slate quarries strikes are unknown. Lastly, and to this I attach the greatest importance of all, the contractor is a member of a partnership, acquiring rights and incurring responsibilities in relation to his fellow-contractors, taking part in their labours on equal terms, sharing their anxieties, and interested in common with them in the ultimate result of their common efforts.

But the influence of the arrangements I have described is not limited to the class which comes immediately under their operation. A circumstance which gives especial importance to the *status* of the contractor in the slate quarry is that, placed as nearly as possible midway between the position of the ordinary labourer and that of the capitalist pure and simple, it forms an easy stepping-stone for the elevation of the masses from the precarious position of dependence upon the general labour-market—a position which, if there be value in experience, is absolutely incompatible with any substantial and permanent improvement of their state.

The mode in which the ascent is made will be illustrated by a remark made to the writer by the lessee of the Dolwyddellan slate quarry—a gentleman to whose kindness he is indebted for most of the information contained in this paper. In reply to a question with reference to a difference in the rates of wages prevailing in different localities, he observed that the men before us would be very slow to leave their present occupation even for the prospect of a considerable advance in their wages—“because,” he explained, pointing to a large quarry hole filled with water, “so soon as this is pumped dry, there is ‘not a man amongst them who does not know that he will have a chance of a share in the new contracts which will then be opened.’” Thus the labourers who have not yet attained to the rank of contractors are ever working in full view of an early promotion to this

position, their attainment of which, however, depends entirely on their success in recommending themselves to the favourable consideration of the owner of the quarry as well as to that—an equally important condition—of their own fellow-workmen, without whose approval and co-operation they would hope in vain to take advantage of the opportunities which are daily opening. Even the less important class of workmen, they who are employed in clearing away refuse, also pass occasionally into the ranks of the quarryers proper, and ultimately into those of the contractors, and thus feel in some degree the stimulus which such prospects supply. The whole society is thus kept constantly under the incentive of the public opinion of the *élite* among its own members—a state of things which serves to diffuse throughout the entire organization an influence of the healthiest kind.

Nor has the beneficent tendency of these arrangements failed to become effectual in the actual condition of the population of the slate quarries. Their ordinary earnings, according to information supplied to me from various sources, may be set down as follows:—

For carters of refuse from 12s. to 17s. per week.
For “germyns” (quarriers at fixed wages, many of whom are mere boys), 12s. to 20s. per week.

In the case of the contractors the variations are much more considerable; the results ranging from 3*l.* to 8*l.*, and occasionally to 10*l.* per month. In a small quarry near Dolwyddellan which I visited, three contractors had just concluded a “bargain,” in which they had netted for the month of July the sum of 9*l.* each. On the whole, so far as I could make out, the earnings of the contractors average something like 5*l.* monthly.

These rates are, I should suppose, about equal to those prevailing in corresponding occupations—I mean occupations in which the toil, risk, and skill are about the same—in the most favoured industrial districts in England; and such a result is surely very creditable

to the industrial system of Wales. For it must be remembered that capital is very far from increasing with the same rapidity in Carnarvonshire and Merionethshire as in, say, Lancashire and Staffordshire; while, on the other hand, owing to the general ignorance of the English language which prevails in the former counties—a circumstance which cannot but operate in some degree as an impediment to emigration—the relief afforded by this safety-valve to the labour market there, is likely to be considerably less than in other portions of the United Kingdom. The external conditions affecting wages in the Welsh counties are therefore decidedly less favourable than they are in the more progressive districts of England; and yet the labouring classes in the former localities are, it seems, comparing analogous modes of labour, equally well off. The explanation, as will be anticipated, is to be found in the slower movements of population in the Welsh districts. In Carnarvonshire population advanced in the decade, 1851 to 1861, at the rate of 9 per cent.; in Merionethshire at the rate of 3 per cent.; in both counties at an average rate of 6 per cent.; while over the whole of England and Wales population during the same period went forward at the average rate of 12 per cent. and in the more prosperous parts of the country—say Lancashire and Staffordshire—at the rates respectively of 20 per cent. and 23 per cent.¹

¹ I do not give these figures as accurate exponents of the relative growth (by way of natural increase) of population in the several districts. No doubt the results in all instances have been much modified both by emigration and by migration within the limits of Great Britain. So far as the former cause is concerned, the probability is, for the reason stated, that, could its effect be ascertained (unfortunately the emigration reports do not distinguish the natives of Wales), the result would be considerably to strengthen my case. And, as regards the latter, though there is no doubt a considerable Welsh movement towards the manufacturing centres of England, this proceeds in the main from the agricultural districts; while, to be set against this, there is an Irish immigration into Wales. On the whole, I think the figures I have given may be accepted for the purpose for which they are

The comparatively slow growth of capital in those counties of North Wales is thus, as regards its effect on the condition of the people, neutralized by a growth of population proportionately slow; and the practical result is a rate of remuneration fully up to the English level. The defect in respect to material conditions is compensated by greater vigour in the moral. Now, I think it is impossible not to connect this satisfactory state of things with the *régime* of industry under which it has come to pass. Indeed, to what else can it be ascribed? Religious influences, no doubt, are powerful in North Wales. Nothing apparently can exceed the activity and zeal of the dissenting bodies; and the good effect on the morals and general demeanour of the people is very observable. But, however compatible a strong sense of religion may be with worldly prudence in those matters on which the growth of population depends, the mundane virtue can yet scarcely be regarded as a specific religious result: certainly it is not one which it is usual to hear inculcated from the pulpit. Nor can the fact be attributed to education in the ordinary sense of the word; for, notwithstanding the strongly pronounced literary instincts of the Welsh people, literary education in North Wales seems to be in a decidedly backward state. Improvements, it is said, of an important kind have in recent years been effected in the primary schools; but this has occurred since the mass of the present generation of Welshmen have entered upon active life. It is rare, out of the principal towns, to find working people over the age of thirty who can exchange more than a few words of English: hundreds of thousands cannot accomplish even this little; and even in the towns it is not uncommon to meet substantial shopkeepers who are unable to sign their names to their own bills. In one quarry I was told that some considerable number of the workmen were un-

adduced, as corroborative illustrations of tendencies which there are independent grounds for believing to exist.

able to read and write. It is therefore not to the superiority of their school instruction that the industrial population of these Welsh counties are indebted for the remarkable circumspection and self-control which they display in their most important social relations. I can only regard this phenomenon, therefore, as the fruit of that practical training in habits of thrift and wise foresight which is provided for them in the industrial system under which they live.

It thus appears that, in point of pecuniary returns, the position of the Welsh quarriers does not suffer by comparison with that of workmen in analogous occupations even in the most prosperous districts of England—districts far more favourably circumstanced, as regards the physical conditions affecting the remuneration of the labourer, than those of the slate quarries. But mere pecuniary return affords after all but an inadequate criterion of the labourer's condition. Fully as important as the amount which he earns is the mode in which his earnings are spent; and it is here that the peculiar strength of the co-operative principle comes into play. Those who have watched the working of "co-operative stores" have been struck with their effect in awakening and stimulating the saving spirit among the working classes—a result which has been attributed to the strong temptations to frugality presented by those establishments in the opportunities they afford for investing small sums at a fair rate of profit. In the particular form of co-operation, however, to which I have in this paper called attention, this incident of the co-operative plan such as it exists elsewhere—the provision, that is to say, for small investments—does not exist. As I have already intimated, to qualify a man for taking part in a "bargain," no capital is needed beyond the moral capital of a good character. Even should he be in a position to decline the credit which is readily extended to him, the amount required for the purchase of such implements and tools as it falls to his share of the bargain to provide

would be exceedingly small. Nor does he find in the other branches of industry flourishing around him those special opportunities which are wanting in his own. Co-operative stores have indeed, as I have been informed, been established in one or two localities in North Wales, and with excellent results; but they do not yet exist on such a scale that they can be supposed to have sensibly affected the habits of the people. As regards the larger operations of slate quarrying, they are, as it happens, peculiarly unsuited as a field for small investments. This will at once be understood if regard be had to what has been already stated—that the amount of capital required to start a slate quarry is very large, while the risk of the speculation is very great. The former obstacle might indeed be overcome by recourse to the joint stock expedient, were the joint stock plan capable of being applied with advantage to this branch of production; but this seems not to be the case: at least, so think the working quarriers, and their opinion seems to be borne out by facts.¹ In the case of the population

¹ Numerous joint-stock companies are at present working quarries in North Wales; but, as a rule, I understand they are not flourishing concerns; all the most prosperous undertakings being in the hands of individuals or private co-partneries. The reasons for the superiority of the latter are apparent enough. There is no need that the business organizations of such an undertaking should be other than extremely simple. In Penrhyn Quarry, for example, where the operations are on an immense scale, the entire business of keeping the accounts, &c. is performed by two clerks. This cannot but give a great advantage to individuals and small co-partneries over the necessarily more cumbersome organization of a joint-stock company. Again, the special knowledge and singleness of design which are so essential in this branch of industry are much more likely to be realized by individuals, or associations consisting of a few partners, than by a more numerous body. In addition to the reasons mentioned in the text, it is probable that some distrust of the Saxon enters into the Welsh workman's reluctance to commit his savings to undertakings which are carried on largely by Saxon capital: this seems to be expressed in his proverb:—"Os byth y gweli sais ac engine yn dyfod i gwaith pacia dy bethan." [When you see an Englishman with his engine coming to the work, pack and be off.]

of the slate quarries, therefore, there seems to be an entire absence of those special incentives to frugality and providence which have been incidents of the co-operative plan in its better known forms. Nevertheless frugality and providence are found to characterise this population in a remarkable degree. The mere fact that, according to the prevailing custom, wages are paid at so long an interval as once a month, implies of itself a considerable fund of accumulated savings existing among the body of the people. But this would give but an inadequate idea of their saving disposition. It is, I am assured, quite common to find in the ranks of the contractors men who have laid by from one to three and four hundred pounds. In one quarry which I visited, a man was pointed out to me—a manual labourer—who was known to be in receipt of between 80*l.* and 100*l.* a year, independently altogether of his current earnings—the return on capital saved and invested. This, no doubt, was an extraordinary case, but not, I was assured, by any means without a parallel. Well, where is the field for the investment of these considerable accumulations? A portion goes into agriculture; prosperous quarrymen turning farmers in their latter days, or sometimes combining with farming pursuits occasional adventures in their old line. Retail trade again absorbs some. But probably the largest part of the funds finds its way into the associations known as “building societies.” These “building societies” might with more propriety be called loan societies; their functions consisting in advancing money to be invested in building speculations, which, though for the most part undertaken by the members, are yet carried on on individual account, resembling in this respect the “*Verschussvereine*” described by Professor Huber in his interesting paper on “Co-operation.”¹ These societies are extremely popular with the workmen; and as to the range of their operations the reader will be able to

form some notion when I state that several considerable towns in North Wales have been almost entirely built by the capital supplied through this agency. Thus the pretty town of Bethesda, within five miles of Bangor, is almost entirely the creation of the enterprise of working men deriving their funds from this source. Llandudno, Rhyll, and Upper Bangor owe their existence in large part to the same cause. As to the substantial comfort in which the people of the quarry districts live, no one who has visited these districts will, I think, feel any doubt. Nor is it comfort merely. The style and finish of the workmen's houses are very remarkable, more particularly in Bethesda and the neighbourhood of the Penrhyn quarries, where the elegant model furnished by Colonel Pennant in his own village has been turned to excellent account. A feature in the architecture is the variety of modes in which the staple material is brought into requisition. Roofing is but a small part of the purposes to which the slate is applied: there are slate door-posts, slate window-settings; the ground story is generally flagged with slate, which makes its appearance besides in many places where one would little expect to find it. I know not whether the extreme cleanliness of the Welsh is to be attributed in any degree to the advantages of this material; but they are certainly pre-eminent in this virtue. The exquisite neatness of some of the cottages in Bethesda and Trefriw is such as I imagine would not easily be matched out of Holland. The kitchen-parlour is quite a marvel of cleanliness, tidiness, and order—with its slate floor swept till it shines, its “varnished clock” clicking “behind the door,” and its furniture, though mostly made of common wood, polished to such brightness that it does not pale even before the constellations of brass knobs which glitter all around. In the village where I was staying I have watched an old woman who lived on the opposite side of the street come out in showery weather to scrub her door-slab clean as fast as it was soiled by the foot-

¹ Published in the “*Social Science Transactions*” for 1862.

steps of each careless passer-by. The apparition would follow on the clearing away of a shower almost with the regularity of the lady in the toy barometer. Nor should we omit to say that some attempt at a library is rarely absent from these quarriers' cottages. The selection may not contain the newest publications, and is not perhaps very choice; but at least it shows literary aspirations—a soul for something above the quarry. The Bible, generally in Welsh, I observed held a constant and honoured place in the literary store.

The simplicity of character and kindness of heart among the poorer classes of Welsh people are very striking and attractive. In illustration of these qualities I may mention an admirable trait, which may I think be fairly connected with their co-operative system.

The occupations of the slate quarry involve, as may readily be believed, no small amount of risk to the limbs and lives of those who engage in them; the accidents from blasting, falling in of rocks, &c. being unfortunately very numerous, and frequently fatal; and, as might be expected, there is no lack of provision against such disastrous contingencies. Besides the ordinary friendly societies which flourish in immense numbers all over the country, no quarry of any importance is without its sick club. Numerous associations exist framed with a special view to compensate for the losses incident to mutilation and death. But such machinery does not satisfy the cravings of the fraternal feeling that subsists among the workmen. The assistance from this source (where the accidents are of a serious nature, involving calamitous consequences to the family of the injured man) is almost invariably supplemented by voluntary contributions raised among his fellow workmen. "As a class," writes a correspondent, himself extensively engaged in this business, to whom I have already expressed my obligations, "As a class, quarriers are very liberal. If by accident a father of a family is killed, the wife will go through the quarry and frequently

"gets (if her husband has been a man of good character) from 10*l.* to 20*l.* "At other times collections are made in the chapels, and almost in every instance they show great liberality." He adds that these occurrences are unfortunately very frequent; several such calls on the workman's pocket having quite recently occurred in a single quarry in the short space of a few months.

Such then is the "contract system" of the slate quarries, and such are its fruits. Divested as it is of certain extraneous advantages which accompany other forms of "co-operation," it sets, as it seems to me, in all the stronger light the inherent virtue of the principle itself—the principle of combining the exertions of labourers towards a common result in which they have a joint interest—an interest varying with the success of their common efforts. The results here obtained are obtained not so much through the increased force of the external inducements to prudent or righteous conduct, as by strengthening the character of the workman, calling into action qualities of mind which in the ordinary condition of the labourer's life lie dormant, enlarging his mental horizon, stimulating his reflective powers, widening his sympathies—in a word, developing those principles and habits which furnish the only solid basis for any permanent improvement of his state.

How far the particular arrangement which I have described admits of being extended to other departments of production is what actual experiment can alone determine. *Prima facie*, it would seem that one condition only was indispensable to its adoption—the possibility of splitting up the work to be done into a number of small and independent tasks. It is at all events certain that the success of the plan in the instances in which it has been tried has been remarkably great; and this, considered with reference to commercial, no less than to social, results. As an expedient for the practical solution of the labour-problem, the weakness of the "contract system" seems to me to lie

in the fact that under it the labourer and the capitalist are still distinct persons ; the two capacities do not coalesce in the same man. The difficulty which, under the ordinary relations of labour and capital, occurs in settling the rate of wages might equally occur under the "contract system" in settling the terms

of the contract. That it does not in practice arise is to be ascribed, I imagine, chiefly to the circumstance to which I have already adverted—the double capacity in which the contractor acts, as at once employer and employed ; and, for the rest, to the general intelligence which the system engenders.

IRISH LAWYERS AND STATESMEN OF A BYGONE GENERATION.

BY A MAN ON THE SHADY SIDE OF FIFTY.

As a school-boy of twelve years old, I had been taken by my father to visit the great patriot and Irish orator, Grattan. I well remember that the impression he produced, on a mind then so little competent to comprehend his powers, was one of reverence, not unmixed with awe. There was about him a simple, gentle dignity, a courtesy and elaborate politeness, which reminded me of what I had read of the *vieille cour*. He was dressed in a blue coat and buff waistcoat, with knee-breeches and silk stockings. He had not abandoned the old pigtail, and the studied politeness and elegant elaboration of his manner produced on me an impression which time cannot efface. He had the look and bearing of a thorough gentleman. His enunciation in private life was slow, and his pronunciation seemed, to my child-like ears, somewhat quaint and foreign. "James," he pronounced *Jeems*; "oblige," *obleege*; and he used the words, "a dish of tea," and "a dish of coffee:" but this was the fashion in his early day, and to that fashion he adhered to the last. It has been written by the late Charles Phillips, in his "Curran and his Contemporaries," that Grattan was short in stature, and unprepossessing in appearance. He was rather over than under the middle height, being about five feet nine; and, so far from being unprepossessing in appearance, his features were regular, and full of expression.

For three or four years after the time when I first beheld him, as a boy, I had

frequent opportunities of seeing him in private, and I must say that never before or since have I met with one whose manner so captivated and charmed me. It was eminently distinguished and well-bred. I was intimately acquainted with the Right Hon. Robert Day, a retired judge of the King's Bench in Ireland, who had been Grattan's contemporary in the University of Dublin and at the Temple, and who lived a great deal with him in a house which they rented together at Windsor Forest; and Day always spoke of his friend as being the most fascinating man in private life, and more especially in female society, he had ever known. They made a tour in France together in 1768. Grattan, though not speaking the language fluently, read largely the French authors and dramatists.

The first time I ever heard Grattan speak was at a dinner of about twenty persons, given in his honour by an attached friend and admirer, and at which his health was proposed by the host. For the first minute or two he faltered and hesitated; but this nervousness soon disappeared, and, once fairly started, he riveted and charmed attention. I subsequently heard him at a public meeting, where he spoke for about ten or fifteen minutes. He was then seventy-two years of age, and his voice, never in his best days powerful, was thin and somewhat reedy. A critic might have observed that the gesture was somewhat theatrical, and that anti-

thesis and epigram were too frequently resorted to; but the impression produced on me, as a whole, by this great speaker in his decline was, that in boldness of thought, in grandeur and gorgeousness of language, in intensity of feeling and imagination, he was unequalled.

The private life of Grattan was as pure as his public life. His affections centred in his family; and, after country and family, his dominant passions were literature and the pleasures of a country life. On one of the occasions in which I was in his company, he recited long passages from Cowley, Dryden, and Pope—among others the “Elegy on the Death of an Unfortunate Lady;” and I was amazed not more at his powers of memory than at his powers of elocution. The late Mr. Justice Day informed me that Grattan could repeat all the finest passages in Dryden and Pope without missing a line.

Day, and Day’s friend Lord Plunket, always used the word “Sir,” in speaking to Mr. Grattan; and Mr. Commissioner Burrows, an eminent member of the Irish Bar, as well as Mr. Serjeant Good, Mr. Wallace, and Mr. John Burne, eminent King’s Counsel, followed this example. In mentioning this to the Knight of Kerry, he said Mr. Peel, when Secretary for Ireland, treated Mr. Grattan with as respectful a deference. In truth, in private life Grattan was universally respected and beloved. “I never knew a man,” said Wilberforce, “whose patriotism and love for his country seemed so completely to extinguish all private interests, and to induce him to look invariably and exclusively to the public good.” His life was a great moral lesson, and death has neither diminished nor tarnished his renown.

He was a man of undaunted and fearless courage, at a time, and in a country, when not merely moral but physical courage were indispensable. He fought and wounded Corry, the Irish Chancellor of the Exchequer, and he would have fought Flood, his rival, had not the House of Commons interposed. When entering his seventy-third year, an Irish mob assailed him on

the day of his being chaired through Dublin, after his return in 1818. One of the miscreants flung at the old statesman a stone, which cut open his cheek under the eye. While still bleeding and suffering from pain, he jumped from the chair, and, seizing the stone, which had fallen at his feet, flung it with failing strength in the direction from which it came. From the place where he received this wound he was carried to one of his committee-rooms in the neighbourhood, and from the balcony of the drawing-room he imputed the injury and insult, of which he had been the victim, to chance, not design.

On the accession of George IV. in 1820, Grattan proceeded to London to present the Roman Catholic petition; but the exertion, though he travelled by easy stages, and by canal, was too much for him, and he died, shortly after his arrival, on the 4th June, 1820. At the request of the foremost men of the nation, he was buried in Westminster Abbey, two of the Royal Dukes being pall-bearers. It might truly be said—

“Ne’er to these chambers where the mighty
rest,
Since their foundation, came a nobler guest;
Nor e’er was to the bowers of bliss conveyed
A purer spirit, or more holy shade.”

Grattan’s second son, and his biographer, succeeded him in the representation of the city of Dublin; and his eldest son sat for many years as one of the members for Wicklow County; but to neither of these gentlemen, now passed away, did the genius or talents of their illustrious father descend.

Fourteen of Grattan’s great speeches were on the Roman Catholic question, four were on the declaration of the rights of Ireland, two were on Tithes, and four or five were speeches against the Union. He spoke in the English House of Commons on June 23rd, 1815, on the Corn Laws, and on May 25th of the same year on the downfall of Bonaparte. Here is an extract from this speech:—

“I agree with my honourable friends in thinking that we ought not to impose a Government upon France. I agree with them in de

precating the evil of war, but I deprecate still more the double evil of a peace without securities, and a war without allies. Sir, I wish it was a question between peace and war; but, unfortunately for the country, very painfully to us, and most injuriously to all ranks of men, peace is not in our option; and the real question is, whether we shall go to war when our allies are assembled, or fight the battle when those allies shall be dissipated? Sir, the French Government is war; it is a stracocracy, elective, aggressive, and predatory; her armies live to fight, and fight to live; their constitution is essentially war, and the object of that war the conquest of Europe. What such a person as Bonaparte, at the head of such a constitution, will do, you may judge by what he has done. And first he took possession of the greater part of Europe; he made his son king of Rome; he made his son-in-law viceroy of Italy; he made his brother king of Holland; he made his brother-in-law king of Naples; he imprisoned the king of Spain; he banished the Regent of Portugal; and formed his plan to take possession of the Crown of England. England had checked his designs; her trident had stirred up his empire from its foundation; he complained of her tyranny at sea: but it was her power at sea which arrested his tyranny on land—the navy of England saved Europe. Knowing this, he knew the conquest of England became necessary for the accomplishment of the conquest of Europe, and the destruction of her marine necessary for the conquest of England. Accordingly, besides raising an army of 60,000 men for the invasion of England, he applied himself to the destruction of her commerce, the foundation of her naval power. In pursuit of this object, for his plan of Western empire, he conceived, and in part executed, the design of consigning to plunder and destruction the vast regions of Russia. He quits the genial clime of the temperate zone; he bursts through the narrow limits of an immense empire; he abandons comfort and security, and he hurries to the pole, to hazard them all, and with them the companions of his victories, and with them the fame and fruits of his crimes and his talents, on speculation of leaving in Europe, throughout the whole of its extent, no one free or independent nation. To oppose this huge conception of mischief and despotism, the great potentate of the North, from his gloomy recesses, advances to defend himself against the voracity of ambition amid the sterility of his empire. Ambition is omnivorous—it feasts on famine, and sheds tons of blood, that it may starve on ice, in order to commit robbery or desolation. The Power of the North, I say, joins another prince whom Bonaparte had deprived of almost the whole of his authority—the king of Prussia, and then another potentate, whom Bonaparte had deprived of the principal part of his dominions—the emperor of Austria. These three Powers, physical causes, final justice, the influence of your victories in Spain and Portu-

gal, and the spirit given to Europe by the achievements and renown of your great commander, together with the precipitation of his own ambition, combine to accomplish his destruction. Bonaparte is conquered. He who said, 'I will be like the Most High,' he who smote the nations with a continual stroke, this short-lived Son of the Morning, Lucifer, falls, and the earth is at rest; the phantom of royalty passes on to nothing, and the three kings to the gates of Paris; there they stand, the late victims of his ambition, and now the disposers of his destiny and the masters of his empire. Without provocation he had gone to their countries with fire and sword; with the greatest provocation they came to his country with life and liberty. They do an act unparalleled in the annals of history, such as nor envy, nor time, nor malice, nor prejudice, nor ingratitude can efface; they give to his subjects liberty, and to himself life and royalty. This is greater than conquest."

A contemporary and friend of Grattan during his long life, though eighteen years his junior, was William Conyngham Plunket, afterwards Lord Plunket. This gentleman, though the son of a poor Presbyterian minister in the north of Ireland, claimed descent from the same stock as the Louths and Fingalls.

The ministers of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland even now lead a hard and rugged life. Their stipends are small, their lives are simple, their ministrations are laborious, their course of life is frugal. One hundred and forty years ago they were in a worse position than they are now. They subsisted altogether on the voluntary offerings of their flocks, which were not then supplemented by the "Regium Donum." For the most part, though better born and better educated than the Roman Catholic priests, they were but a couple of degrees higher in the social scale. But they possessed more self-control and discretion.

Plunket's father was said to have been a man superior to his fellows. He was sagacious and solid-headed, a man not merely book-learned, but keen-witted and worldly-wise. Strongly tinged with the intrepid and inquiring spirit of his creed, he was a Liberal in politics, and an Arian in religion. But so staid was his character, so respectable and respected was he, that he was called from Monaghan to the care of the church of

Enniskillen, the capital town of the county Fermanagh. There he married Mary, the sister of Redmond Conyngham, Esq. somewhere at the close of 1748; and in 1750 a son was born to him in the person of Patrick Plunket, the elder brother of William, afterwards one of the most eminent physicians in the city of Dublin. Fourteen years afterwards, namely, in 1764, while his father was still a minister in Fermanagh, William Conyngham Plunket was born in that county.

Four years after this his father removed to the metropolis, having been selected by the elders to fill the place of minister to the Socinian congregation in Strand Street. Some of the ablest men in Dublin—as Sampson, the barrister, Drs. Tennant and Drennan—and some of the most intelligent and respected merchants—Travers Hartley, who represented Dublin in Parliament, Alexander Jaffray, the Graysons, the Wilkinsons, the Wilsons, the Stewarts, the Lunells, the Maquays—belonged to this congregation, and were habitual attendants at it; as also were Sir Archibald Acheson, of Markethill, Armagh, Colonel Sharman, the ancestor of Sharman Crawford, Sir Capel Molyneux, the descendant of the author of “*Molyneux’s Case of Ireland*,” and Archibald Hamilton Rowan, afterwards implicated in the Rebellion of 1798. With many of these gentlemen the father of William Conyngham Plunket was intimate, and he also associated with the Liberal politicians and chief men of letters in Dublin. For ten years he gave eminent satisfaction to his hearers, winning daily upon their affection and regard. But in 1778, while still comparatively a young man, he died, leaving a widow and young family. He lived, however, long enough to see his eldest son Patrick established as a rising physician, with every prospect of attaining to the very summit of his profession. As he had died not merely without wealth, but in unprosperous circumstances, the Unitarian congregation of Strand-street, very much to their credit, subscribed a sum of 500*l.* for the educa-

tion of the younger children of the family. The great advocate and statesman that was to be was then in his fourteenth year. He was at once sent to a classical school to complete the education well commenced by his father; and a provision was made for his mother, for whom a residence was purchased in Jervis-street, near the Strand-street meeting-house. Here she was established as a tea-dealer, being patronized by the elders and congregation of her late husband.

In 1779, Plunket, with his friend and fellow-townsmen Magee (the son of a shopkeeper of Enniskillen—some say of a strolling player—and afterwards Archbishop of Dublin), stood for a sizarship at the University of Dublin. They failed in attaining what they desired, and probably deserved, and entered as pensioners. From the period of their entrance into the Irish University, both Plunket and Magee, who were fast friends and companions, exhibited great talents. Plunket obtained a scholarship with ease, and highly distinguished himself as a member of the Historical Society.

The ablest undergraduates of the University were all members of this society, and all of them had the liberty of entering the Irish House of Commons, as the Westminster scholars had and have that of entering the Commons House in London. It was the privilege of Plunket, as a student of Trinity, to have heard Henry Burgh, Flood, Yelverton, Grattan, and Duquerry. Charmed by the silvery voice, the inimitable manner, the simple dignity of Burgh; swayed by the powerful diction and luxuriant fancy of Yelverton; subdued by the “*resistless powers*,” as he himself called them, “*that waited on the majesty of Grattan’s genius*”—Plunket seems nevertheless to have modelled himself more on Flood than on any orator that appeared during his early youth. Curran, who idolized Grattan, used to say that Flood was immeasurably the greatest man of his time in Ireland; and this seems also to have been the opinion of Plunket, who admired, re-

spected, and loved Grattan as much as it was in his nature to love any man.

It is not wonderful that one so grave and austere in manner, and so logical in mind as Plunket, should have been greatly pleased with Flood. But he was no servile imitator of that distinguished speaker and statesman, and never was it remarked at the Historical Society that Plunket imitated any one. Without much apparent effort, he bore off the bell in the debates of his juvenile contemporaries. Among these were some very able men indeed. There was Peter Burrowes, afterwards an eminent King's Counsel, and subsequently Commissioner of Insolvents; there was John Sealy Townsend, afterwards a Master in Chancery; there was Luke Fox, afterwards a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas; there were John Whitley Stokes (the father of the present eminent physician of that name), William Magee, afterwards Archbishop of Dublin, Standish O'Grady, afterwards Chief Baron of the Exchequer, Radcliff, afterwards Judge of the Prerogative Court, and Quin, subsequently an eminent King's Counsel and leader of the Munster Circuit. Of all these able men it was an acknowledged fact that Plunket was the superior.

In 1784, when about twenty, Plunket came over to London, and entered himself at Lincoln's Inn. His intimate friends and companions, during his sojourn in London, were Mr. Joseph Higginson, and Mr. Michael Nolan, afterwards a King's Counsel at the English Bar. Mr. Higginson had been called to the Irish Bar in 1779; but, having taken a decided part during the Volunteer movement, he was unfavourably looked on by the authorities. The result was that he had come to England, and entered the commercial house of Bell and Co., Aldersgate-street. The firm was ultimately known as that of Bell, Higginson, and Co., China and East and West India merchants. Mr. Michael Nolan, Plunket's other friend, had been his contemporary in the University of Dublin. He was a man of sound judgment, and considerable attainments as a scholar and a lawyer.

Having a brother an attorney in Dublin, he had purposed being called to the Irish Bar, but he ultimately changed his views, and was called to the English Bar, at which he practised with success. He was the author of a well-known book, the "Justice of the Peace," published 1791-1793, and also of one on the "Poor Laws," which went through many editions. He was subsequently one of the counsel for Mr. Plunket, when that gentleman brought an action for libel against the editor of "Cobbett's Register," in 1804. That he was a man of great learning in his profession is evident from his elaborate argument in showing cause against the rule for a new trial in the case of Governor Picton.¹

Nolan and Plunket read law and history together when students at Lincoln's Inn, and the intimacy thus early created subsisted till the period of Nolan's death in 1836. Plunket was called to the Irish Bar in 1787. Among the leading counsel of that day were John Fitzgibbon, then Attorney-General, and afterwards Lord Chancellor; Arthur Wolfe, afterwards Lord Kilwarden, and Chief Justice; Fletcher, afterwards a Justice of the Common Pleas; Beresford, Burton, Duquerry; William Downes, afterwards Chief Justice of the King's Bench; Robert Day, the friend and contemporary of Grattan, and afterwards one of the Justices of the King's Bench; Fox, afterwards a Justice of the Common Pleas; Smith, afterwards Master of the Rolls; and Fitzgerald, afterwards Prime Serjeant. Curran, without much business at this period, had already distinguished himself as a great advocate; and Saurin, afterwards for so long a period Attorney-General, and who was seven years Plunket's senior at the Bar, was fast rising into practice. Without many friends, and without any connexion with attorneys, Plunket had up-hill work before him. He is said, I know not how truly, to have received half-guinea fees at Trim, where the North-west Circuit then commenced. But there was nothing discreditabie in this. Half-guinea fees for justifying

¹ *State Trials*, vol. xxx. p. 733.

bail, and putting counsel's hand to paper, prevailed in England for more than five-and-forty years after the period of Plunket's call. Be this as it may, Plunket had to contend, in his earlier days, with such men as Duquerry, Chatterton, Arthur Moore, Bushe, and M. Ball (afterwards Serjeant Ball), some of them much his seniors, some of them a little his juniors, but all of them men of ability. It is said by Mr. J. C. Hoey, who has written a memoir of Lord Plunket, that he was so poor that he had to sell his gold medal (he means, of course, the gold medal obtained at Trinity College, Dublin) to go his first circuit. I mention this statement to express my disbelief in its accuracy. There were twenty members of his father's congregation in Strand-street, ready and willing to offer young Plunket the means to go the circuit if he needed it; irrespectively of which there was his brother, Dr. Patrick Plunket, a physician fast rising into the highest eminence when Plunket was called, to lend him any aid required. Seventy-six years ago circuits were in Ireland travelled much more cheaply than now. A pint of good wine was then had for a shilling or fifteenpence; and bread, meat, fish, and fowl, were all sold at a low figure. But, even though prices had been double what they were in 1787, there is reason to think that Plunket could have easily found the means to travel the North-western Irish circuit.

In his early career at the Bar, Plunket had lodgings in the house of a Roman Catholic trader, the junior partner in the firm of Macauley and Hughes, of George's Quay. These gentlemen were ship-agents, and owners of some of the principal sailing packets then and subsequently plying between Dublin and Holyhead, Dublin and Parkgate, and Dublin and Liverpool. The head of the firm was a staunch Protestant and Orangeman, while the junior partner, Mr. Michael Hughes, was a devout Roman Catholic. It was with this latter gentleman that Plunket lodged, and a friendship appears to have sprung up between the two, which continued during their respective lives.

The rise of many celebrated men at the Bar is truly said to be owing to the "accident of an accident." It is related by Mr. O'Donoghue, an Irish barrister, that young Plunket was acquainted with the conducting clerk of an eminent firm of attorneys, who, assured of the abilities of his young friend, gave him instructions to draw a heavy bill in Equity. The bill having been despatched in a most masterly manner, the head of the house was so struck with it that he sought the acquaintance of the junior, invited him to his house, sent to him briefs and pleadings, and consulted him in most of the cases in course of progress in his office. This solicitor was named McCausland. He was a man in large and lucrative practice, and had held the place of examiner to Baron Hamilton since 1781. McCausland, who had been member for Donegal county, had an only daughter, and this lady Plunket married in 1791, when he was twenty-seven years old, and had been four years at the bar.

While a junior at the Bar Plunket continued his intimacy with Magee, who attained a fellowship, and subsequently became Archbishop of Dublin; with Burrowes, who was rising into eminence on his circuit; with Bushe, six years his junior; and with a more remarkable man in one sense than any of them—Theobald Wolfe Tone. Tone and Plunket were of the same age, and entered the University of Dublin nearly at the same period. From his earliest days Tone had been a reader, and, what is rarer, a thinker. When he entered college he was possessed of much more general information than the generality of freshmen. There was, besides, an energy and a force of character and of will about him which marked him out for a leader of men. His tutor was Matthew Young, a celebrated mathematician, and of this able scholar he acquired the friendship and esteem. At the Historical Society Plunket and Tone were often pitted against each other, but the two men differed as much in the nature of their characters as of their talents. Tone was a man of speculative

views, a bold and original thinker, ardent and enthusiastic, who had deeply meditated on forms of polity and systems of government, and who was smitten with the theories of the French Revolution, and of Republicanism. Plunket, on the other hand, was a Northern Whig, with definite views and fixed opinions. If then in theory a little Republican, and in religion more of a Rationalist than a Ritualist, he was a sincere admirer of the British constitution, and neither a democrat or a Jacobin. Tone was both. He was restless, he was energetic, he was enthusiastic; but there was so much of sincerity about him, he was so disinterested, single-minded, gentle-hearted, and unselfish, that he was a universal favourite with men who dissented from his opinions, and who hated his politics. Nevertheless, a coldness sprang up between Plunket and Tone in 1790, when the latter founded the Society of United Irishmen. This coldness continued till 1795, at which period Tone, whose treasonable proceedings had been discovered by the Government, obtained leave, through the interference of Marcus Beresford, George Knox, and Arthur Wolfe, the Attorney-General (afterwards Lord Kilwarden), to expatriate himself to America. Plunket had no personal interview with him before he left, but shortly before his departure for the New World addressed him the following letter:—

"DEAR TONE,—I embrace with great pleasure the idea and opportunity of renewing our old habits of intimacy and friendship. Long as they have been interrupted, I can assure you that no hostile sentiment towards you ever found admittance to my mind. Regret—allow me the expression on your account—apprehension for the public, and great pain at being deprived of the social, happy, and unrestrained intercourse which had for so many years subsisted between us, were the sum of my feelings. Some of them, perhaps, were mistaken, but there can be no use now in any retrospect of that kind. It is not without a degree of melancholy I reflect that your present destination makes it probable that we may never meet again, and talk and laugh together as we used to do, though it is difficult to determine whether these jumbling times might not again bring us together. In all events, I shall be most happy to hear from you, and write to you

often and fully, and to hear of your well-being wherever you may be. If I had known your departure was to have been so very immediate, I would not have suffered you to slip away without a personal meeting. I shall hope to hear from you as soon as you get to America. I formerly had friends there. The unfortunate death of my brother you have probably heard of; perhaps, however, I may still have some there who might be useful to you. Let me know where and in what line you think of settling, and, if any of my connexions can be of any use, I will write to them warily. I beg you will give my best regards to Mrs. Tone, and believe me, dear Tone, with great truth, your friend,
W. PLUNKET.

"May 20, 1795."

The man to whom this kindly and creditable letter was addressed, with his wife, his sister, three children, and £700 in money, sailed for America in May, 1795, where he landed in the August following. It required immense fortitude to sustain any individual freighted with so many calamities—a man who, in addition to the pains of exile, endured the anguish of being an outcast from his friends, his profession, and his country. Tone was in a strange land, and without personal friends; but he was a man of antique fortitude and heroism, and he defied the frowns of fate. His first design was to settle down as a farmer in Princeton, New Jersey; but letters from Ireland changed his purposes. Previously to leaving his country, he had had an interview with Thomas Addis Emmet, soon to follow him. He told Emmet that he did not consider his compromise with the Government extended further than to the banks of the Delaware, for that his offence was expiated by exile. Arrived in Philadelphia, he accordingly sought an introduction from the French Minister to the French Directory in Paris, with a view to the invasion of Ireland. Citizen Adet at first declined all communication; but Tone persevered, exhibited to him credentials from the Roman Catholics in Ireland, and asserted that his country was discontented and organized. At length, Adet gave him the required introduction. He landed with it at Havre in February, 1796, proceeded to Monroe, the United States Ambassador, and procured from

him an introduction to Clarke, Duc de Feltre. Clarke put him into communication with Carnot; and though he spoke the French language imperfectly, his statements were so clear, his arguments so cogent, that the cool-headed and reflective Carnot, the organizer of victory, attentively listened. This was a step gained. But Tone had to encounter the envy and jealousy of certain of his countrymen, who were employed in the French military and secret diplomatic service, and who perceived that their influence and occupation were gone if the recently-arrived exile succeeded. Notwithstanding the attempts made to whisper him down by the Ducketts, Madgetts, Sullivans, MacSheehys, Fitzsimmons, and other Milesians, acting in the French service, the Irish ex-barrister persevered, and at length succeeded in convincing the Minister that an expedition was feasible.

This was a great achievement for the son of Peter Tone, a coachmaker at 44, Stafford-street, Dublin, who carried on his business within a stone's throw of the Rev. Thomas Plunket's meeting-house and residence. In Stafford-street and Strand-street, Plunket and Tone had known each other as schoolboys; there was but eighteen months' difference between them in point of age; they went through college together; were called to the Bar nearly at the same time; and yet how different were their fates! Here was Tone, in 1796, an exile, and almost a pauper, soliciting the aid of a foreign Government for the invasion of his country, while his early friend and fellow-student had risen into prosperous business, and was looked on as one of the ablest lawyers and advocates of his country. In 1796, a short time before his appointment as *chef de brigade*, Tone's means were exhausted. He had but two louis d'ors left, and he was obliged to apply to the French Minister of War for the means of subsistence. At this juncture, his old college-companion, Plunket, was making nearly a couple of thousands a year, and within eighteen months afterwards he was appointed a King's Counsel.

Ultimately, however, on New Year's day, 1797, Tone set sail, under the command of Hoche, with a fleet of seventeen sail of the line, thirteen frigates, and thirteen transports. But storms arose which separated the fleet, only sixteen sail of which arrived in Bantry Bay, where they lay for sixteen days without attempting to land. Seven sail of the line afterwards reached Ushant, being all that remained of forty-three sail which had departed from Brest.

Tone next joined the expedition of the Texel, consisting of fifteen sail of the line, ten frigates, and many sloops and transports. The land force amounted to 13,500 men, with three months' provisions; but, as Duncan lay off the mouth of the Texel, the expedition never sailed. The third expedition, known as Humbert's, to which Tone was also attached, landed at Kilalla, and was obliged to surrender to an overwhelming force, under Lord Cornwallis, on the 8th of September, 1798. Tone was taken prisoner, tried in Dublin, and sentenced, by court martial, on the 10th November, 1798. That he was mistaken and misguided, all calm-thinking men now allow; but his enemies and opponents at the time fully admitted that he was disinterested and single-minded, and that he acted from no personal motive, but wholly from mistaken views of what he believed to be for his country's good.

In 1798, the year of the rebellion, Plunket, as being the most rising barrister of the day, was made a King's Counsel, and in the same year he was returned to Parliament for the borough of Charlemont. Before he had been ten years at the Bar, he rose into general business on the North-west Circuit, and in the courts of Common Law; but it was in Chancery chiefly that his peculiar powers had scope. In that court he was often opposed to that most able and accurate lawyer, Saurin (afterwards Attorney-General), to O'Grady (afterwards Chief Baron), to John Sealy Townsend, to Bushe and Joy (afterwards Chief Justice and Chief Baron), and to John Kirwan,

an eminent King's Counsel of that day. On circuit, his chief opponents were McClelland (afterwards a Baron of the Exchequer), Jebb (afterwards a Justice of the King's Bench), James Whitestone, a very able and learned lawyer and King's Counsel, Robert Johnstone (afterwards a King's Counsel), Luke Fox (afterwards a Judge of the Common Pleas), and Rolleston, afterwards an eminent King's Counsel, and one of the leaders of his circuit. But, in force and cogency of reasoning, in power of generalization, in rapid, close, and irresistible argument, in the capacity of luminously grasping his facts, and drawing irresistible deductions favourable to his own views, Plunket was unequalled. Saurin was more calm, unimpassioned, and equable, as well as a more profound lawyer; Bushe, more ornate, plausible, and rhetorical; O'Grady, more bitter and bantering; and Townsend and Burton had more of black-letter lore: but Plunket was their master in the predominating strength and solidity of his intellect, though he was inferior to more than one among them in readiness and dexterity.

In the year of the fatal rebellion, Plunket, owing to his own talents and ability, partly also to his connexion with the family of the McCauslands, had obtained excellent business in Chancery; but so highly was he thought of as an advocate and general and constitutional lawyer, that he was, with Mr. Curran and Mr. Ponsonby, selected counsel for the Sheareses, and both barristers argued the demurrer of Harry Sheares with eminent ability. But, when Curran, prompted by the most noble feelings, made so vigorous an effort shortly afterwards to save Wolfe Tone from the executioner by moving for a Habeas Corpus, Plunket did not volunteer his services for his old friend and companion, and the heat and labour of the forensic effort fell on Curran and Peter Burrowes, who had prepared Tone's defence before the court-martial. I do not blame Plunket for holding aloof on this occasion. He probably felt that Tone, having made a compromise with the Government in 1795, was only permitted to go into

exile on the condition that he was thenceforth and for ever to abstain from all treasonable practices, and that the Government would not have spared his life on any other conditions. Be this as it may, he held aloof, and, it must be admitted, consistently; for though he was not averse from constitutional efforts to ameliorate the condition of his country, he ever held in detestation the Jacobite faction, and had a horror of those who would resort to France to carry out their views for the regeneration of Ireland. Plunket, it should be remembered, though a Whig and a Liberal, was not a Revolutionist or a Republican. In truth, he had donned a uniform, and became a member of the Lawyers' corps, in order to preserve our shores from that very invasion which Tone had laboured with great vigour to effect. The young barrister was also a member of Parliament, and, in the absence of Grattan, had taken a leading, indeed, the very foremost, part in the ranks of the Whig opposition. He was member for the borough of Charlemont; and the proprietor of that borough, though a volunteer of 1782, and still stickling for the independence of Ireland, did not wish to reduce his country to the necessity of seeking a favour of France.

Plunket, coming with a high academic, and a still greater Bar, reputation, had soon gained the ear of the Irish House of Commons. It is very possible that he entered on the discussion of the Union question at first with despondency, seeing that it must be carried both by bribery and intimidation; but, this being so, his efforts in the House of Commons appear the more wonderful. At the Bar meetings, among his fellows and brother professional men, Plunket spoke of the measure and its prospect of success with complete unreserve and the utmost candour. He expressed his belief that fear, animosity, a want of time to consider the consequences, and 40,000 British bayonets would carry the point; but in Parliament, on the other hand, he held the highest and loftiest tone, and no man of his day—a day fertile in great men and oratory—stood

in so prominent a position. I have said that Grattan, a man of more fire, genius, and fervid energy, was not then a member of Parliament. He was more original than Plunket, more pointed and terse in his language, perhaps he was more sagacious, and he certainly possessed a more extraordinary power of invective and sarcasm. But though the great lawyer did not take such high flights at this period—though he was less epigrammatic and antithetical—though he was less sublime and more severe in his style than the patriot of 1782, yet he was as great an orator after another mould and fashion. Plunket's style of speaking would also be preferred by the generality of Englishmen. He was sparing of metaphor, and his taste was severe, indeed fastidious. His diction was the perfection of English prose undefiled. It was perspicuous, strong, and idiomatic, and occasionally fringed with apt and admirable illustrations and the most biting and caustic satire. It was while he represented the borough of Charlemont in the Irish Parliament that he came into collision with Lord Castlereagh upon the question of the Union. He certainly attacked the noble lord, the chief secretary for Ireland, more boldly and unsparingly than any of the party with whom he acted. Here, by way of example, is his comparison between Pitt and Castlereagh:—

"The example of the prime minister of England, inimitable in its vices, may deceive the noble lord. The minister of England has his faults: he abandoned in his latter years the principles of reform, by professing which he had obtained the early confidence of the people of England: and in the whole of his political conduct he has shown himself haughty and intractable. But it must be admitted that he has shown himself by nature endowed with a towering and transcendent intellect, and that the vastness of his moral resources keeps pace with the magnificence and boundlessness of his projects. I thank God that it is much more easy for him to transfer his apostasy and his insolence than his comprehension and sagacity; and I feel the safety of my country in the wretched feebleness of her enemy. I cannot fear that the constitution which has been formed by the wisdom of sages, and cemented by the blood of patriots and of heroes, is to be smitten to its centre by such a green and limber twig as this."

The Union once carried, Plunket subsided from a legislator and a statesman into a practising Irish barrister in a capital without a parliament. It enhanced his regretful feeling to find that the men who voted for the Union were elevated into Justices and Chief Justices, not because of their sterling professional merit, but because of their utility to the minister. For fifteen years after the Union, it may be safely averred that the Bench of Justice was occupied by not a few men of whom Plunket and others thought that they ought never to have been raised to the dignity of the ermine.

Plunket had no lack of briefs before the Act of the Legislative Union was passed. After 1800 he rose into large and lucrative business, and was deemed so formidable an advocate, that the Crown secured his services in the case of Robert Emmet. The Attorney-General on that occasion was O'Grady, afterwards Chief Baron; and the Solicitor-General, McClelland, afterwards a Baron of the Exchequer. The case for the Crown was opened by the Attorney-General, in a speech of great ability and clearness, and eminently moderate in tone. The unhappy prisoner called no witnesses, and it was urged by one of his counsel, Mr. McNally, that the Crown had no right of reply. But the Court ruled otherwise, and the duty would have devolved on the Solicitor-General, had not the Attorney-General (O'Grady) particularly requested Mr. Plunket to rise and address the Court. His so doing occasioned animadversions then and long afterwards; but, to any one acquainted with the usages of the profession, it is unnecessary to state that Plunket had no option but to obey the call of the Attorney-General. I have very recently read the reply of Plunket on the prosecution, and I do not find in it any language of which a gentleman or a lawyer, placed in a most painful position, need be ashamed. Plunket, at every period of his life, had a horror of United Irishmen, only less intense than his hatred of Jacobinism, Bonapartism, and Imperialism. In defending one of Emmet's partisans shortly

afterwards, Curran, who was at one time supposed to sympathise with the United Irishmen, used language much stronger than Plunket.

On the 22d October, 1803, three-and-thirty days after Emmet's trial, Plunket was appointed Solicitor-General under the Addington administration. In 1805 he became Attorney-General under Pitt, and he retained office in the Grenville administration, generally known as All-the-Talents, with Bushe as his colleague as Solicitor-General. In 1807, after having twice failed in contests for Dublin University, he was returned to the Imperial Parliament for the borough of Midhurst. At this period the most eminent and statesmanlike of public men was Earl Grenville; and it is not wonderful that Plunket attached himself to one who resembled himself in attainments and character of mind. Both were men of proud character, both were signally indifferent to popularity, both held mob applause in sovereign contempt, and both looked on French Imperial principles with a horror bordering on detestation. There was a further similitude between Lord Grenville and Plunket: both were resolute and strenuous for what was called Roman Catholic emancipation, as the best way of extirpating French principles and French influence in Ireland. Irrespective of these considerations, Plunket was a man to give his confidence to a high-souled, high-principled chief. He left office with the Grenville party in 1807, surrendered his English seat, and resumed his practice of his profession. His old opponent in the Court of Chancery, Saurin, against whom he had been so often pitted in causes, succeeded him as Attorney-General, and for fifteen years continued to enjoy the emoluments of office. In the interval between 1807 and 1812, when he was returned for the University of Dublin, Plunket devoted himself assiduously to the pursuit of his profession, and certainly distanced all competitors. He was employed as leading counsel on one side or other in all the great causes in Chancery, and made the largest income in the profession, with the two

exceptions of Saurin and Bushe, Attorney and Solicitor-General. If we deduct the official from the private gains of these gentlemen, Plunket made a larger income than either of them, and he greatly distanced such eminent practitioners as Burton (afterwards a judge), Joy (afterwards Chief-Justice), Jebb (afterwards a judge), the two Pennefathers (subsequently judges), and Le-froy, at present Chief Justice of the Queen's Bench. Between 1807 and 1822, when he was again appointed Attorney-General, under the vicereignty of Lord Wellesley, I should say that Plunket's private practice was from 7,000*l.* to 8,000*l.* per annum—an immense sum for Dublin. From 1822 to 1827, when he was appointed Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, his private practice and official income averaged together about 14,000*l.* a year. Moreover, in 1812, he had, by the death of his brother, Dr. Patrick Plunket, who had never married, acquired a large fortune. The doctor left him 60,000*l.* in money, and a very valuable library. He was, therefore, in a position to take his place in the House as an independent member.

The greatest authorities declared that Plunket had reached the height of Parliamentary oratory. Lord Dudley wrote to his friend Dr. Coplestone, that for its gravity and sagacity, its energy and intensity, its exactitude, its sober, stately grace, he preferred Plunket's style to any he had known or read of. Of the "Peterloo" speech, in November, 1819, he also wrote, "I wish you had heard him, in answer to Mackintosh. He assailed the fabric of his adversary, not by an irregular, damaging fire that left parts of it standing, but by a complete and rapid process of demolition, that did not let one stone continue standing on another." Between 1807 and 1829, Plunket made nine speeches on the Catholic question, all marked by his peculiar excellencies—great force of reasoning, great vigour and purity of expression, and great felicity of illustration. Every word was weighty; and the chain of reasoning

coiled irresistibly around the subject, grasping it as in a vice. Of these speeches, twenty years afterwards, Sir Robert Peel, one of the ablest of his opponents, said, "Lord Plunket was, in my opinion, the most powerful and able advocate the Catholics ever had. I will say that he, more than any man, contributed to the success of the Roman Catholic question." It is not, therefore, wonderful that, when the Duke of Wellington determined to bring forward the Roman Catholic Relief Bill, in 1829, he solicited Lord Plunket to sit by his side, and to fight the battle for him in the House of Lords. This he did not less willingly than ably, and with the passing of this Relief Bill his senatorial career in a great degree closed. He was then, and had been for two years previously, Chief Justice of the Common Pleas in Ireland, and he seems to have thought—and to have thought wisely—that it would be unseemly for a judge to mingle in party strife.

When the Whigs came into power in 1830, he was made Lord Chancellor of Ireland, which position he continued to hold (with the exception of Sir R. Peel's short tenure of office in 1834-5) till 1841. On the 18th of June in that year, the great lawyer—against whom some Chancery barristers, led by Mr. Sugden, now Lord St. Leonard's, raised a clamour, because Mr. Canning proposed to make him Master of the Rolls in 1827—was forced by Lord Melbourne to surrender the Irish seals to make way for Sir John Campbell. The Bar of Ireland voted him an address on this occasion, in which it expressed "the profoundest admiration for his talents and acquirements, which never shone with greater brilliancy than at the period of his removal from office." Nor was this the only notice taken of his removal. Sir Robert Peel denounced it in indignant terms in Parliament.

As a member of the Upper House, Lord Plunket addressed the Lords rarely. He spoke scarcely more than a dozen times between 1827 and 1841, occupying as he did for more than ten of these years judicial offices. But, though he

spoke not often, he spoke well, wisely, and weightily.

Plunket was at all times indifferent to applause. He never could be got to correct his speeches, or to give a fuller report of them. Only one of them is correctly reported—that which he made on the Catholic question, 1813. The speech delivered on the Catholic question, in 1821, was one of the greatest orations ever heard in Parliament. It was of this discourse that Sir R. Peel said, "It stands nearly the highest in point of richly combining the rarest powers of eloquence with the strongest powers of reasoning." On the afternoon of the day on which that speech was spoken, I was myself—then in my teens—introduced into the House of Commons for the first time, and I can speak of the impression the oration produced on Brougham, Mackintosh, and other leading men of the Whigs, as well as on Castlereagh and Canning. I read three of Plunket's speeches on Irish questions connected with Catholic claims, in 1825, but none of them were of the calibre of the speech of 1821. As a student and a barrister, between 1823 and 1827, I heard many of his arguments in Chancery, and all his addresses to the Court and the Jury in the Ex Officio informations in 1823; and, taking him in all, he appeared to me the greatest and most effective advocate and the most powerful reasoner I ever heard. He was a strong, square-built man, with broad and massy shoulders and a deep, full chest. His face, rather coarse in feature and outline, was redeemed from vulgarity by the noblest and highest of foreheads. He was a man of strong passions and acute feelings. But he knew how to control and keep in subjection his emotions and feelings, though the task must have been a difficult one.

I had the good fortune to be presented to Lord Plunket in my seventeenth year; and, when I had attained the age of twenty, and became a law student, I ventured to ask him what books I should read. I remember, as though it were yesterday, calling at his lodgings, a hatter's shop in St. James's-street, in

the spring of 1824. "Read," said he, "at present, 'Dalrymple on Feudal Property,' 'Sullivan's Lectures,' and 'Gilbert's History of the Common Pleas.' Read also 'Blackstone' daily, 'and also 'Boote's Suit at Law;' and, 'when you have mastered these, take 'to 'Coke Littleton,' and read no book 'but that. Any man who has mastered 'Coke Littleton' is armed *cap-à-pied*.'" When he had finished this word, Sir John Newport entered the room, and I withdrew.

The next time I saw Plunket was in a post-chaise a few days afterwards with Sydney Smith turning the corner of Clifford-street, Bond-street. His huge jaws were dilated with laughter, and the veins of his forehead swollen with exuberant hilarity. The wittiest of Edinburgh Reviewers had titillated the risible muscles of the great orator almost

to tears. They were going into Hertfordshire together, to spend from the Friday till the Monday with a noble host, their political friend.

I do not believe that Lord Plunket ever set his foot in the House of Lords after the indignity cast on him by Lord Melbourne. From 1841 to the period of his death he remained at his seat in Old Connaught, near the town of Bray. He occupied himself till 1850 in reading the poets of his country and of Greece and Rome; but towards 1851 his mind began to decay, and from that period till his decease, on Thursday the 5th of January, 1854, in his ninetieth year, he amused himself with the society of his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. In private life, and as a member of a family circle, he was all that was good, kindly, and amiable.

THE UNSEEN MODEL.

BY GEORGE MACDONALD.

FORTH to his study the sculptor goes,
In a mood of lofty mirth.
"Now shall the tongues of carping foes
Confess what my art is worth.
'Neath the dome of my brain last night she rose,
And to-night shall see her birth."

He stood, and with proud uplifted hand
He struck the formless clay:
"Psyche, arise!" he said, "and stand,
In beauty affronting the day.
I cannot find thee in any land—
I will make thee. And so I say."

The morning had dropped the veil that lies
All day over the truth,
When the sculptor said, "I will arise
And make a woman in sooth:"
And he models and makes till daylight dies,
And its forms turn all uncouth.

The sculptor lighted his lamp so bright;—
"I will work on," said he,
"In spite of the darkness. The very night
Shall hurry and hide and flee
From the glow of my lamp, and the making might
That shineth out of me."

The sculptor modelled, the sculptor made,
But not a line or limb
The will of the worker quite obeyed,
Or yielded all to him.
What could it mean? He was half afraid:
"Night-work in clay is grim.

"'Tis the lamp," he said; "but all will be right;
And the morning comes amain."
So he wrought and modelled the livelong night,
At the Psyche of his brain.
He lifted his eyes, and lo! the light
Looked in at his window pane.

The lamp went out. The grey light spread
Through films of window-dew.
The shadows melted; each cast stared dead;
And each marble glimmered blue.
The sculptor folded his arms, and said,
"Now I shall see her true."

Backward he stepped. A dumb dismay
Moulds his lips to a cry of fear.
There she stands—no Ideal in clay,
No Psyche from upper sphere!
'Tis the form of a maiden—dead, away,
Forgotten for half a year.

Her soul to his he had witched and wiled;
And gently she stole to his side.
He wearied and went. The maiden smiled;
But with dying autumn she died.
Now, risen, she stands, the sculptor's child,
And she will not be denied.

For his Pride on Art's throne would have leapt—
And Love shall be his doom.
Psyche awoke her; forth she crept;
He made *her* in the gloom.
Henceforth she sits where once she slept,
In his bosom's secret room.

And his soul will haunt her form with sighs;
And his heart will pine and rue.
And still in his study, where shapes arise,
Each marble they carve and hew
Shall have this maiden's mournful eyes,
And her shape shall glimmer through.

CHARLES STURT:

A CHAPTER FROM THE HISTORY OF AUSTRALIAN EXPLORATION.

JUST now, when so much attention is being called to Australian exploration, and while the work is going on so very satisfactorily, it may not be amiss if we while away half-an-hour in recalling the deeds of an earlier adventurer in the same field, at a time when the nature of the country towards the interior was utterly unknown, when nearly every plant was new, and when no navigable river had been discovered to the eastward of the Blue Mountains. Let us follow the footsteps of the first successful explorer of the interior of the great continent—of the man who penetrated almost to the centre of it, and who left his name like a monument on the great bare map of Australia for twenty years, hundreds and hundreds of miles beyond the boldest of his contemporaries. Let us follow the track of Charles Sturt, the father of Australian exploration.

From 1788 to 1813, the narrow strip of land between the Blue Mountains and the sea was found sufficient for the wants of a population amounting, in the latter year, to 10,400, including 1,100 military (population at present about 1,000,000). At this period, no white man had penetrated 100 miles from the sea; but, to the west, the mountains hung like a dark curtain, and shut out the knowledge of all beyond.

These mountains are but little more than 3,000 feet in height, but among the most singularly abrupt in the world—so abrupt, that they baffled every attempt to surmount them. The intrepid surgeon, Bass, explorer of the southern coast, was foiled, after the most desperate efforts. A Mr. Cayley penetrated sixteen miles, to meet with the same disappointment. At length, however, in the year 1813, the first great drought of the colony settled down inexorably; and Providence said, in most unmistakeable terms, "Cross those mountains or starve."

Three men rose and obeyed—Blaxland, Wentworth, and Lieutenant Lawson, of the 194th regiment. They fought their way to the summit, and looked over into the glorious western land. Then their provisions failed, and they came back and told what they had seen.

Australia was blessed in those days with a most energetic governor. This governor, Macquarie by name, not only sent instantly his surveyor-general, who confirmed the good news and discovered the river Macquarie, but set his convicts to work, and made a splendid road—an Australian Simplon through the mountain—and in fifteen months from that time, just as Bonaparte landed from Elba, drove his wife over the mountains (say in a gig, for respectability's sake); picnied on the Macquarie river, and founded the flourishing town of Bathurst.

Everything went charmingly. Mr. Evans proceeded to the westward from the picnic party, discovered another fine river (the Lachlan) flowing, like the Macquarie, full and free to the west. It seemed that, according to all precedent, these waters ran into larger ones, and that a Nile or a Mississippi was to be discovered by merely following one's nose. The men of those times were ignorant of the vast depressed basin of the interior, in which so many fine streams lose themselves by evaporation. Oxley discovered this region. Sturt attacked it; was beaten back from it time after time on the west and north-west, but conquered it gloriously on the south-west, after a journey for which we are at a loss to find a parallel.

In 1817, Mr. Oxley, surveyor-general, went down the Lachlan, and found that it lost itself among level marshes. He tried the Macquarie, with the same result. The channel of this last river was lost among vast reed beds. A third river (the Castlereagh), traced by him,

confirmed the previous observations. There was no doubt now that, in ordinary seasons, these large streams were spread abroad into a dead level country, and were lost by sheer evaporation, unless, indeed, they found their way into a vast tideless sea in the interior.

So stood the question until 1828. In 1826 another fearful drought set in, and lasted for two years. After that time, the western rivers were reported to be lower than they had ever been seen; and it became evident that now or never was the time to penetrate the vast reedy marshes which had stopped Oxley, and, by crossing them, to see what lay beyond. An expedition was formed, and the command of it was given to Captain Charles Sturt, of the 39th Regiment. He started from Paramatta on the 9th of November, 1828; and on the 26th of December, having proceeded about a hundred miles down the Macquarie, and having passed for some days through a level, dreary flat, with belts of reeds, he came to a wall of reeds, which prevented his further progress by land, and necessitated the launching of his boat.

At first the course of the river was narrow and tortuous; but at length, in a very few miles, it grew broader. This, so far from being a good sign, was a bad one. The river was spreading out into the marsh; for the flood-marks, which formerly were many feet above the water, were now barely a foot. It was evident that the river was losing power; the current grew almost imperceptible, and at this point, also, the trees disappeared. Three miles further the river, thirty yards broad as it was, came to an end; the boat grounded, and Captain Sturt got out; and, for his own satisfaction, walked right round the end of it, and got in again. There was an end of the Macquarie.

Unsupplied by any tributaries, and receiving its waters entirely from mountains 200 miles away, the time had come for the river when its mountain supply was counterbalanced in the very dry season by evaporation. In very wet seasons the surplus water is carried westward by fifty tiny channels. Carried westward, but whither. Into an inland

sea, or into a great watercourse running north-west? That was the problem before Captain Sturt—the problem he solved at last.

Having rowed back to his camp, Captain Sturt made an expedition, a circuit of some 200 miles to the north-west, which resulted in nothing. From this time till the 18th of January the whole party persevered in their efforts to get round the north of the miserable country which surrounded the marshes. Every attempt to the westward was foiled. The ascent of a small mountain rising out of the waste revealed nothing whatever except the horrible level expanse, stretching westward like a sea. They were, in fact, standing on the St. Kilda of the dividing range, and looking over the Atlantic of low land so recently raised from the sea.

So they struggled, westward and northward, without hope, down a dry creek, with sometimes, but very seldom, a pool of water in it. And suddenly, without expectation or preparation of any kind, they came to the edge of a cliff some fifty or sixty feet high, at the base of which flowed a magnificent river, stretching away from north-east to south-west in vast reaches, eighty yards broad, and evidently of great depth. Splendid trees grew on its banks; its waters were covered with countless legions of pelicans, swans, and ducks; the native paths on each side of it were as broad as roads. It was a magnificent discovery. In one instant it dispelled the notion—which had arisen one hardly knows how—that the trend of land was towards the north-west. It proved at a glance that this was a great trench, carrying off all the innumerable eastern rivers southward, and showed that the Southern Ocean, and not Torres Straits, received their waters. That its sources and its *embouchure* were both far distant from the place where Sturt stood, in silent gratitude, was evident from its great size and depth; and from this moment the Darling took its place for ever among the great rivers of the world, and Charles Sturt's name was written down among the foremost of the great band of successful explorers.

Though a great geographical blunder,

involving an error of nearly 2,000 miles, had been cleared up, it fared but poorly with the expedition. In five minutes, or less, congratulations and hand-shakings were exchanged for looks of incredulous horror. They forced their way to the banks of the stream, and found it was salt, too salt to be drunk.

But little more remains to be said of this great river in this place. They followed it down for many miles, subsisting precariously on the puddles of fresh water which lay about the bank. The river at night was covered with leaping fish; innumerable wild fowl still floated on its bosom; the banks were fertile and beautiful; but the water was salt. The bullocks stood in it, with only their noses above water, and refused to drink it; the men who attempted to do so were made fearfully ill. At one time they found a current in it, which they discovered was fed by great brine springs; at another it ceased altogether, and a bar of dry sand, over which you might ride, crossed it. A strange, weird, anomalous river, on whose banks they were nigh dying of thirst!

It was necessary to turn. It was resolved on. Captain Sturt was merely to go a few miles down the river, on a forlorn hope, leaving the party behind in camp. The day was intensely clear and cloudless, burning hot, without a breath of air. Captain Sturt and Mr. Hume were sitting on the ground together, making their chart, when they heard the boom of a great cannon, fired apparently about five miles to the N.W. The whole expedition heard it; there was no doubt about it. A man was sent up a tree, and reported nothing but perfectly level wooded country in every direction. What that sound was we shall never know. Neither the captain in the army, nor the brave gentleman-pioneer and bushman, nor the convicts, could make head or tail of it. No doubt, coming at such a time, "it made a 'strong impression on us for the rest of the day.'"

Captain Sturt, with Mr. Hume, went forty miles down the river, and found it stretching away south-west, in reaches

grander and more majestic than before, covered with wildfowl, swarming with fish, but as salt as ever. There he left it, to meet it twice again—once higher up, as we shall see immediately; and once again hundreds of miles away, in the most awful moment of his adventurous life.

We need say but little more. After terrible hardships the expedition succeeded in striking the Darling ninety miles higher up than the first point of discovery, and recognised it in an instant. The same long canal-like reaches; the same clouds of waterfowl and shoals of fish; the water still intensely salt! They had now seen it through 150 miles of its course, and found no change. It was time to abandon the expedition. They got back in safety, having by tact and courage avoided any collision with the natives. The results were important. The trend of the interior basin was southward, not northward! From the water-marks by the shore of this great canal-like river, it was evident that in nine summers out of ten, in any season almost but this, the driest hitherto known in the history of the colony, the rainfall would be sufficiently great to overpower the brine springs in its bed, and make it run fresh. And, lastly, from the size of the channel, it was inferred that the sources of the river were many hundred miles to the north, probably within the tropic.¹

And now we come to the second and greater expedition. The question remained, "What becomes of the Darling towards the south-west?"

It seemed an utterly hopeless task to carry boats back to the point at which Captain Sturt had touched it, to launch them on its waters, and to run down. The plan evidently was to try and cut it at a point lower down; but how? The Macquarie had been tried, as we see. The Lachlan was known to be a

¹ This branch of the Darling, which may be called the true Darling, loses its name higher up, but may be roughly said to rise in the latitude of Moreton Bay (27°). The lower part, however, receives waters from far inside the tropic.

miserable poor thing of a river, worse than the Macquarie. What remained? What river was there flowing west with vitality sufficient to reach the Darling before it perished?

The Morumbidgee? Well, that did seem something of the kind—rising here behind Mount Dromedary, fed by a thousand streaming creeks, from a thousand peaceful gullies, till it grew to manhood, to strength, to passion, and hurled itself madly from right to left, against buttress after buttress of its mountain-walled prison, until it was free; and then sweeping on, sleeping here, snarling there, under lofty-hanging woodlands, through broad rich river flat, through a country fit for granary of an empire, sometimes in reaches still as glass, sometimes in long foaming shallows of frosted silver. A river among rivers, growing in majesty and beauty, as a hundred tributaries added to its volume, until at last, where the boldest stockman had left it and turned, it went still westward, a chain of crimson reaches, towards the setting sun! Could this river die, save in the great eternal ocean? Was there a curse on the land, that such a thing should happen?

This is very unbusiness-like language. But I think it must have been something of this kind which Charles Sturt meant, when he said that the attention of the Colonial government was, under these circumstances, drawn to the fact that the volume of water in the Morumbidgee was more considerable than that in either of the rivers before mentioned, and did not seem to decrease, but rather the contrary, in a westerly direction. So they deputed Captain Sturt to follow down the Morumbidgee, and find out whether he could carry it on until it cut the Darling. Saul went after his father's asses, and found a kingdom. Captain Sturt went to look after that miserable old Darling, and found a kingdom also, and a very fine one too.

But there was another reason which gave people great hopes that the Morumbidgee went somewhere, and not nowhere, like other Australian rivers.

In 1825 Mr. Hume (before-mentioned) and Mr. Hovell, had gone a strange journey to the south-west, keeping great mountains on their left, to the south and east, nearly all the way, through an utterly unknown, but fine and well-watered, country, until, when 500 miles from Sydney, they came on a great arm of the sea, and came back again, disputing whether or no they had reached the Port Phillip of Collins, or the western port of Bass. It was, in fact, the former, though they could not decide it. This journey of theirs, down to the desolate shores of a lonely sea, was made only thirty-eight years ago; yet the best way to describe it now is to say that they passed through the towns of Yass, Goulbourn, Albury (with the wonderful bridge), Wangaratta, Benalla, Seymour, and Kilmore, until they came to the city of Melbourne, which is now slightly larger than Bristol, and exports eleven millions a year. "Darn 'em," said an old Yankee to me once, *apropos* of the new South Australian discoveries, "they're at it again you see."

On their route they crossed three large streams, going north and west from the mountains which were between them and the sea, which they named the Hume, the Ovens, and the Goulbourn. Now, if either of these streams joined the Morumbidgee, there were great hopes that their united tides would be strong enough to bear one on to the junction with the Darling. These were the prospects of the expedition. We will now resume our narrative.

A whale-boat was constructed, fitted loosely, and taken to pieces again and packed in the drays, ready for construction in the interior. A still was also provided, lest the waters of the Darling should be found salt where they struck it. The expedition started from Sydney on the 3rd of November, 1829, exactly a year after the starting of the previous one, whose course we have so shortly followed. Mr. Hume was unable to accompany Captain Sturt on this journey. His principal companions were, Mr. George Macleay; Harris, his soldier

servant ; Hopkinson, soldier friend of Harris ; Frazer, an eccentric Scot, declining to forego his uniform ; dogs ; a tame black boy on horseback ; Clayton, a stolid carpenter ; the rest convicts.

On the 21st of the month, they were getting among the furthest stations. "From east-south-east to west-north-west, the face of the country was hilly, broken and irregular, forming deep ravines and precipitous glens, amid which I was well aware the Morumbidgee was still struggling for freedom ; while mountains succeeded mountains in the background, and were themselves overtopped by lofty and distant peaks." So says Captain Sturt, in his vigorous, well-chosen language.

At last they reached the river of their hopes, rushing, crystal clear, over a bed of mountain *débris*, in great curves and reaches, across and across the broad meadows, which lay in the lap of the beautiful wooded mountains which towered up on all sides, and which, in places, abutted so closely on the great stream that they had to cross and recross it many times, with great difficulty. Immediately they were beyond the limits of all geographical knowledge ; the last human habitation was left behind at the junction of the Tumut, a river as big as the Morumbidgee, about ten miles above the present town of Gundagai, which has since acquired a disastrous notoriety for its fatal floods. The river was stronger and broader than ever, leading them on towards the great unknown south-west.

The reaches grew broader, and the pasture on the flats more luxuriant ; yet still hope grew stronger. The natives, such as they saw, were friendly ; they caught fish, one of which weighed 40 pounds, (a small thing that, though ; they run up to 120 pounds.) The ranges still continued on either hand. Hope grew higher and higher—it was to be a mere holiday expedition ! At length they left the ranges, and came out on to the great basin of the interior once more ; and a dull unexpressed anxiety began to grow on them hour after hour. The country was getting so horribly like the

miserable desert which had balked them before, on the Macquarie.¹ Still the river held on bravely, and any unexperienced man would have scouted the idea of its losing itself among reed marshes. But ugly symptoms began to show themselves. The soil grew sandy, and was covered with the claws of dead crayfish. The hated cypress began to show too. Two blacks, who had been induced to accompany them, turned back, evidently never expecting to see them again. Things began to look bad.

And worse as they went on. They began to get among the reeds again. The plains stretched away treeless and bare to the north-east as far as they could see, and the river, their last hope, began to grow smaller. They got entangled among sheets of polygonum (a gloomy and leafless bramble) ; the crested pigeon and the black quail appeared—all strong symptoms of the interior desert.

Toiling over a dreary sand plain, in which the dray horses sunk fetlock-deep, they came to a broad, dry creek, which seemed to be the junction or one of the junctions of the Lachlan. They headed back to the river again ; but one of the men, sent on on horseback, rode back to say that the noble river was gone—that there was nothing to be seen but reeds, reeds, reeds in all directions. They had been deceived by another Macquarie !

Fortunately not. After a terrible day on horseback, Sturt forced his way to the river once more, and lay down, half dead with fatigue, in utter despair on its banks. He could not sleep, but, as he lay awake under the winking stars, his purpose grew. At daybreak he was up and on horseback with Macleay. They rode till noon through belts of reeds, the river still holding its own to the south-west. At noon Sturt

¹ How greatly would their anxiety have been increased had they been aware, as we are now, that the river had actually bifurcated already immediately below the beautiful Hamilton Plains, and, that after a ramble of 150 miles, with more or less prosperity, the smaller arm reached the Murray 11 miles above the junction of the main channel !

ruined up, and the deed was done. He asked no advice, he allowed no discussion. He told Mr. Macleay that to push round the reeds toward the north-west in search of the Darling was to endanger the expedition—that the river was still alive; that at any moment it might join a stream from the south-east (he meant one of the three streams discovered by Hovell and Hume, before mentioned); that his fixed and unalterable purpose was to send the drays and horses back, to put together the whale boat, and to row down the river into such country and towards such fate as Providence should will.

One can fancy the smile that came over Macleay's face as his tall, gaunt chief sat upright in his saddle and announced his determination to take this bold and desperate step, for such it was. All the expedition, convicts and all, understood the situation perfectly, and worked accordingly. *In seven days not only had the whale boat been put together, but a tree had been felled from the forest, sawn up, and another boat built and painted; and at the end of the seventh day both were in the water ready for loading.*

Of the convicts he took the carpenter, Clayton, who had superintended and mainly done this wonderful week's work (what *could* such a fine fellow have been doing to get transported?), Mulholland, and Macnamee; of free men, Harris, the captain's servant, Hopkinson, and Frazer (all these three, I believe, soldiers). The others were sent home, under charge of Robert Harris, with despatches.

So they started, rowing the whale-boat, and towing the little boat which they had made after them. The stream was strong, and they swept on between the walls of reeds at a good pace. Two emus swimming across the river before them caused them to land; and, forcing their way to the upper bank, they found that the reeds were ceasing, and that they were fairly committed to the level interior on a stream which was obviously contracting.

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Again the reeds hemmed them in on all sides, so closely that there was barely room to land and camp; the river holding due west. On the morning of the second day the skiff they were towing struck on a sunken log, and went down, with all their stores. The day was spent in raising her, and in diving after the head of the still to which they attached such importance. In the morning it was recovered, and they made sixteen miles. The fourth day of their voyage found them still hemmed in by reeds, which overshadowed the still diminishing river; and it came on to rain, turning also very cold. They camped at two o'clock. No tributary had met them as yet, and hope began to die.

As the current began to deaden, the vast logs carried down by the floods from the better country above began to choke the river, rendering the navigation difficult. But on the sixth day of their voyage there came a gleam of hope. A running creek from the south-east, the first tributary for 340 miles, joined the Morumbidgee, and the boat struck on a reef of rocks, the first ribs of the earth found west of the dividing range; the river grew slightly better, and even the country seemed slightly to improve.

But next day it seemed as if it were all over with the expedition. The river contracted, and was so obstructed by a network of fallen logs that it was impossible to proceed. Night fell upon them, and they delayed the attempt of their forlorn hope until the morning.

They started early. The current was, strange to say, swift once more, and every man had to be on the alert to keep his part of the boat from striking the jagged points of the trees, which, being carried down roots foremost, presented a horrible *cheval de frise*, one touch against which would have left them hopelessly destitute in the midst of a miserable desert. Hopkinson stood in the bow, and behaved like a hero, leaping off on to snags, which sank under his weight, and saving them a dozen times. They pushed through the barrier, which had delayed them the

night before; but, alas! at every reach the same difficulties occurred. At one o'clock they stopped for a short time, and then proceeded, the banks becoming more narrow and gloomy, the turns in the river more abrupt, and the stream very swift. At three o'clock Hopkinson, who was in the bows, called out that they were approaching a junction; in less than one single minute afterwards, they were shot, like an arrow from a bow, through a narrow channel into a magnificent river. The Morumbidgee was no more; and they, dazed and astonished, were floating on the bosom of the majestic Murray, henceforth one of the great rivers of the world.

What a moment in the man's life! It was not merely that a desperate adventure had terminated—as it would seem at the moment—favourably. There was more to congratulate himself on than the mere lucky issue of an adventure. A very carefully considered geographical problem, originated by his sagacity, had been solved by his perseverance. He had argued that the Hume, Owens, and Goulbourn, seen by Hume and Hovell flowing north, would “form a junction,” or, as vulgarians would say, “join,” and that the Morumbidgee would retain sufficient strength to carry its waters to them. The one difficulty had been the Morumbidgee, and that river had not deceived him, though he had so cruelly suspected it. Sturt must have felt on that afternoon, as Adams did, when, having finished his vast calculations, he sat looking through his telescope, and saw the long-expected Neptune roll into the field, or as Herschel and his sister felt, after their three months' labour to correct one unfortunate mistake, when they saw a dim needle of light in the west, which was not a star.

If one had to find fault with Captain Sturt's proceedings, one would be forced to say that it would have been better, on the discovery of this great river, to have gone back at once, to have brought on his *dépôt*, to have communicated with his base of operations at Sydney, and to have done the whole thing with a *Fluellen-like* attention to the rules of

war. I am happy to say such a thing never entered into his head. Sir Galahad saw his horse, armour, and sword, and recognised it as the means of reaching the Sangreal. Sturt saw his boat full of convicts, and recognised it as the means of solving the great problem of the outfall of the western waters. I say I am glad that Sturt committed himself to this strange, wild adventure without one moment's hesitation, like a knight-errant; if for no other reason, because one is glad to see the spirit of the sixteenth century so remarkably revived in the nineteenth. Charles Sturt, the Dorsetshire squire's son, turned his boat's head westward, down the swift current of the great new river, knowing well that each stroke of the oar carried him further from help and hope, but knowing also that a great problem was before him, and begrudging any other man the honour of solving it. It is not well for us to sneer at motives such as these. We must recognise personal ambition as a good and necessary thing, or half our great works would be left undone. He disconnected himself from his base, and began to move his little flying column. Whither?

It seems, from a later passage in his journal, that he had some notion of reaching the Southern Ocean, and coasting back in his whaleboat. I cannot but think that he (who afterwards shewed himself so patient and so sagacious in his unparalleled journey to the centre of the continent) had, on this occasion, calculated, to some extent, the chances against him; yet by his journal one finds no trace of any calculation whatever. Here was the great river, flowing swiftly westward, and he turned his boat's head down it, “*vogue la galère*.”

The Murray, where he joined it, was 120 yards broad; say, roughly, one third broader than Henley reach. The Murray, however, above its junction with the Morumbidgee, is both swifter and deeper, as well as broader, than the Thames at Henley. Captain Sturt speaks of it as being perfectly clear. It doubtless was so in January; but later

on in the summer I think he would have found it assume a brown, peaty colour. At least, such is my impression. I used to notice this fact about nearly all the rivers I knew in Australia Felix. While the vegetable matter was thoroughly washed out of them and diluted by the winter floods, they were—instance the Yarra, Goulbourn, and Ovens—very clear. But later on in the summer, towards February, they began, as the water got lower, to get stained and brown, although not foul; and the little *correginus* (?) of the Yarra, the only one of the salmonidæ which, as far as I am aware, exists to any extent in Australia, seems only to rise to the fly while the waters are clear and green, but to go to the bottom during the summer.

On the lower part of the Morumbidgee they had seen no natives; but on the very first day on the Murray, as we now call this great river, natives reappeared. In the evening a large band of them, painted and prepared for war, advanced on Sturt and his few companions, through the forest. The sight was really magnificent. They halted and broke out into their war-cry. They threatened and gesticulated; but at last, when they had lost their breath, they grew calm, nay, began to get rather alarmed, for no one took the slightest notice of them—which was very alarming indeed. Sturt got them to come down to him, and gave them presents; then put them in a row, and fired his gun in the air. The result was an instant and frantic "stampede." However, after a time, they were induced to return, and sixteen of them, finding no one was the worse for the gun, stayed with them all night. Next day they followed them, and entreated them to stay with them. Their astonishment at the gun shows that Sturt and his party were the first white men they had seen.

It was, in all human probability, *these very blacks*, at least the children and young men among them, who gave some curious trouble to the police at Swanhill, as late as 1854. I say, in all human probability, for Sturt was at this time barely sixty miles from the town

we now call Swanhill, though then close upon four hundred miles from human habitation. The story about these blacks, as it was told me at the time, was this:—A Chinaman, one of those wretched Arroy emigrants that were poured in on us so plentifully at that time, wandered; and he wandered to Swanhill. Why he went there nobody knows, for the simple reason that he had no earthly cause for going there. But he followed his nose, did this Chinaman, and he got to Swanhill; and, when he got there, there were a tribe of river blacks hanging about the town who found him walking in a wood near that place; and these blacks instantly possessed themselves of his person and carried him off into the bush on the other side of the river. The Chinaman did not care a button. He had come on his travels, and during those travels he had come on a tribe of savages, who carried him away into a forest—an ordinary piece of business enough to a man whose knowledge of the world was confined to a back street in Whampoa. You cannot astonish a Sindee or a Chinaman,—the wonders they *do* meet with fall so far below their ignorant anticipations.

So the Chinaman was marched off, perfectly contented, by the black fellows, into the bush. The black fellows removed from the neighbourhood of the settlement, that they might enjoy their prize without interruption. They fed him with the rarest dainties. Grubs, opossum (originally, and with careful cooking, nasty, but which, when chucked on the fire unskinned, ungutted, unprepared, is a good deal nastier), snake, lizard, cockatoo, centipede, hermetically sealed meat from the station which had been unfortunate, lobworms, and every other inconceivable beastliness which black fellows devour before their wives come and beg Epsom salts of you, did this Chinaman enjoy. And they sat and looked at him all day long. The thing was kept a profound secret. It was a wonderful catch for them.

Why? Just for the same reason that you, my dear reader, not so very long

ago, used to be so proud when you caught a mouse or a squirrel, and let your sisters peep into the box where you kept it, as a very particular favour. Nothing else than that—just the childish instinct of keeping something they had caught, as they kept Buckley the convict. But, unluckily, the thing leaked out.

One of those old men, "flour-bag cobblers," as they are irreverently called by the young men, who are allowed to visit three or four of the tribes neighbouring their own without molestation, happened to visit this particular tribe. They could not keep their counsel. In a weak moment, with looks of exultation, they showed him their tame Chinaman. Fired with rage and envy at such an inestimable prize having fallen into the clutches of a rival tribe, this wicked and envious old man went away and informed the police.

The thing got wind; philanthropists took it up; they were determined to benefit this Chinaman, nill-he will-he. That he was comfortable in his present quarters was nothing; he had no business to be, if he was. Public opinion was brought to bear, and a policeman was sent into the bush, to fetch him back.

But they wouldn't give him up. They put their case in this way. They said, "He is not a white man, as you yourselves will allow; therefore he can't belong to you. He is not a black man, for he is yellow; therefore we set up no claim that he is ours. But we, on the other hand, found him walking in a wood, and *caught* him. Consequently by all laws, human and divine, he *must* belong to us." Their case was strong, but it would not do; the trooper was sent back again and fetched the Chinaman away from among the sulky blacks. I do not know what became of him; he may have followed his nose—a thing that may be done without the slightest personal hardship in Australia—to this day; but I rather think I can guess what happened to the old man who "split" to the police. I rather fancy that he found himself laid on his stomach on the grass one moonshiny night, getting himself beaten raw sienna and pale

yellow madder about the back; which is the same thing as being beaten black and blue is to a white man.

Such were these poor children of the wilderness in 1854, who were frightened by Sturt's gun in 1829. Poor wretches! It unluckily happened, by mismanagement on both sides, that it came to be a struggle for bare existence between them and the first squatters. Horrible atrocities were committed on both sides; Glenelg poisonings and severe stockmen massacres on the part of the whites, and innumerable butcheries of lonely shepherds on the part of the blacks. Having heard the case argued so very often as I have, I cannot pronounce any sweeping condemnation on either blacks or whites. If you deny the squatters the right to defend their lives and property, you come inexorably to the conclusion that we have no business in Australia at all. Have we, or have we not, a right to waste lands occupied by savage tribes? If we have not, the occupation of Australia is an act of piracy. If we have, then the confiscation of the Waikato lands ought to have been done thirty years ago, before we supplied the Maories with guns. This is the sort of result you come to, if you apply any general rule to our colonial policy. The law of purchase, which makes us legal owners in New Zealand, proves us to be pirates in Australia.

Meanwhile Sturt sleeps his first night on the Murray. It is time that he, Macleay, and his boatful of soldiers and convicts should awaken and go on.

The river improved with them mile after mile. The current, fed by innumerable springs, grew stronger, and its course was often impeded by bars of rock, which formed rapids, and which showed, also, that they were near to high, water-producing ground; elevations of sandstone, seventy or eighty feet in height, began to appear, also; still, however, the river held towards the north of west, and the country appeared unpromising in that direction.

For six days, passing over a distance of say 190 miles, they swept onwards down the river without adventure. On

the sixth day they fell in with a great tribe of natives, who at first threatened them, but, after being encouraged, made friends with them; for in Mr. Macleay they recognised a dead man, named Rundi, who had been killed by a spear-wound in his side, and had come back to them in his shape. The poor fools ran with the boats which contained their beloved Rundi for two days, and on the morning of the third day Sturt saw them clustering eagerly on a lofty bank ahead of them, watching their movements with intense anxiety.

He soon saw why. Sweeping round a sharp turn in the river, he, without a moment's preparation, found himself on the glassy lip of a rapid, which instantly below burst into a roaring cataract. There was just time for him to stand up in the stern sheets and *decide*. There seemed to be two channels, and he rammed his boat at the left one. In the midst of the rapid she struck on a rock. The skiff which they were towing swept past them and hung in the torrent, but the whaleboat remained firmly fixed. At the terrible risk of her being so lightened as to sweep down the cataract broadside on, two men got out and swung her into the comparatively still water below the rock. After this, having got her head to the stream, they lowered her into safety—thus passing, with incredible good fortune, an obstacle which would have to be passed again on their return. Again the behaviour of the convicts was splendid. One need say nothing of the others, of course.

So passed one adventure: we now approach another and a more terrible one.

The river still perversely held to the north of west, but the friendly natives, in describing its course, always pointed a *little* to the south of west. But, besides this, they made a curious diagram by placing sticks across one another, which no one could understand. Frazer, the Scot, played with them; he sat up with them all night, to his and their infinite contentment; but in the morning they were gone.

The reason was soon apparent,—they were approaching another tribe. The

next morning, the river being so much wider, they hoisted a sail, and sailed pleasantly on. They saw vast flocks of wildfowl overhead; and, after nine miles, looking forward, saw that they were approaching a band of magnificent trees, of dense, dark foliage; and beneath them was a vast band of natives, in full war-paint, chanting their war-songs, and standing line behind line, quivering their spears. The passage of the river was about to be disputed at last.

At first Sturt thought nothing of it. The river was so broad that he could easily pass them. But the blacks knew what they were about. The river suddenly shoaled; the current was swift; and Sturt saw that a great sandbank stretched suddenly one-third across the river below. This the natives took possession of, and this Sturt had to pass.

It seemed a perfectly hopeless business. The expedition was within five minutes of its conclusion. The people at home in Dorsetshire yonder, praying for those travelling by land or by water that Sunday, would have prayed a little more eagerly, I take it, if they had known to what pass tall young Squire Charley had brought himself at eleven o'clock that morning. Macleay and two of the men were to defend the boat with the bayonet; Captain Sturt, Hopkinson, and Harris were to keep up the fire. There would not have been much firing or bayoneting either, after the first flight of a couple of hundred spears or so, each one thrown by a man who could probably hit a magpie at ten yards.

The boat drifted on, the men again behaving nobly. Sturt fixed on a savage, and said he *must* die; his gun was at his shoulder, but it was never fired. Before he pulled the trigger, Macleay called his attention to the left bank. A native, running at the top of his speed, dashed into the water, swam and splashed across, seized the native at whom Sturt was aiming by the throat, and forced him back; and then, driving in the natives who were wading towards the boat, back on to the sand-bank by the mere strength of his fury, the noble fellow stood alone before the

whole tribe of maddened savages, before three hundred quivering spears, stamping, gesticulating, threatening, almost inarticulate in his rage.

They were saved. They were just drifting past their preserver when the boat touched on a sand-bank; in an instant they had her off. For a minute or two they floated like men in a dream, incredulous of their safety; and, while they were preparing to go back to the assistance of the gallant savage, they looked to their right, and saw the Darling—saw it come rolling its vast volume of water in from the northward. The Darling—the river they had tried to follow the year before, five hundred miles to the north, in the miserable desert—found once more, at this terrible time, when each man sat on his thwart, paralyzed with the fear of the terrible danger just overpast!

They saw about seventy natives on the bank of the new river, and landed among them. Seeing this, the others, on the tongue of land between the two rivers, began to swim across, unarmed, in curiosity. Now, they saw the extent of their danger. Captain Sturt, a soldier, used to calculate numbers of men, puts the number of hostile natives at no less than six hundred. They soon became quiet. Sturt rewarded his friend with every expression of good will, but refused to give anything to the hostile chiefs. After rowing a few miles up the Darling, which he found a more beautiful stream than the Murray, and perfectly fresh, he turned his boat's head and renewed his voyage, running up the Union Jack and giving three cheers. They hoisted their sail, and went onwards with their strange adventure.

The channel grew to be much obstructed with large fallen logs of timber, and sand-banks began to appear. Sturt considers that, just after the junction of the Darling, they were not more than fifty feet above the level of the sea. Enormous flocks of wild-fowl flew high over head. The blacks were friendly enough and curious enough. They broke up the skiff they had towed so

far, and found the river, since the junction, holding, as the black fellows had shown them, slightly south of west on the whole. They had now been rowing rapidly down stream for eighteen days.

Day succeeded day, and they still rowed on. After they had passed the junction of the Darling, no further hostility was exhibited by the natives. Their valiant friend, who had risked his life to save theirs, had done his work well. They now found themselves passed on, from tribe to tribe, by ambassadors, and treated in the most friendly way. Seldom do we get an instance of the action of one powerful mind producing such remarkable results. The poor savage was a typical person. In reading the history of the encroachments of the white race on the coloured race, one always finds a Montezuma, a man in advance of the thoughts of his countrymen—a man who believes in us and our professions, and thinks that the great hereafter will be a millennium of tomahawks, looking-glasses, and Jews'-harps. This poor fellow could hardly have succeeded in keeping the blacks quiet without some degree of eloquence. That, when he, single-handed, drove back two or three hundred of them on the sand-bank, he merely frightened them by his fury into believing that the whites were a sacred and terrible race, I can quite believe. But after this he must have gone into particulars, and, shewing the tomahawks Sturt had given them, have begun to lie horribly. There is no other way of accounting for the singular change in the behaviour of the natives. Captain Sturt's great gun-trick fell perfectly dead on the audience at this part of the river. They had heard of it, and never so much as winked an eye at the explosion, but sat defiantly still. The temper of the natives must have been at this time neutral. They were determined to give these men—these white men—these men who came from the land of looking-glasses—these distributors of tenpenny nails—these fathers of Jews'-harps—a fair trial, on condition of their acting

up to the character given of them by those natives who already had received tomahawks—on condition, in short, of being each one furnished with a looking-glass, a string of beads, and a tomahawk. This being impossible, Sturt was treated very much like an impostor on his way back, being made answerable for the wild representation of his friends. If the blacks had any cause for their behaviour, it must have been this.

They let them pass on from tribe to tribe, undergoing the most loathsome examination from the poor diseased savages. And now a new feature showed itself upon the river. The left banks became lofty, above 100 feet high, of fantastically water-worn clay, apparently like the domes of the Mississippi, or the cliffs near Bournemouth. The natives as yet gave no information about the sea.

Now, after twenty-two days on the river, and when they had come some three hundred miles on it, it came on to rain heavily and steadily. They noticed the height of the flood-marks, and saw that a flood would be their destruction; for the men were beginning to fail rapidly.

The river turned hopelessly north again, thrown in that direction by cliffs, apparently, from Sturt's description, of pleiocene, or post-pleiocene, formation. The river ran in a fine glen between them. Still for another hundred miles the river held north-west, and there was no change.

At last there came a message from the sea. A very, very old man, whom they met walking through a wood, fell in love with Hopkinson, and followed them. He got into the boat with them, and spoke to Sturt by signs. He pointed to the north-west, and laid his head upon his hand; that was intelligible—they would sleep that night at a point to the north-west. But what did the old fellow mean by insisting on sleeping due south the night after, and why did he roar like the sea, and imitate waves with his hand? What strange change was coming?

The great change of all. They had come to the Great Bend, which lies

exactly on the thirty-fourth parallel of south latitude. From this point the character of the river changes, and it runs due south towards the sea. The scenery becomes magnificent, the water deeper, the reaches longer, its breadth about a quarter of a mile; and so it goes on, increasing in beauty and magnificence, for the next hundred miles.

Here for the first time the gulls came overhead, and Frazer would have shot one, only Sturt forbade him to kill the messengers of glad tidings. Here too the south wind, which saved their lives, began to blow, and the whale-boat began to leap and plunge upon the waves which rolled up the long windy reaches. Sometimes the river would strike tall cliffs, beautifully ornamented with trees; in other places would sough among great beds of reeds.

When this weary hundred miles was nearly passed they found that there was a tide in the river of nearly eight inches; and next day Sturt got out of the boat and climbed a hill, and saw that the end of it all was come. *Thalatta! Thalatta!* There it was at last, in the distance, with one great solitary headland, wrapped in a mist of driving sea-spray.

Between where he stood and the sea, the river expanded into a large lake, and this he determined to cross for the purpose of seeing whether there was a practicable channel into the sea. The spot on which he stood is nearly identical with the Ferry, at Wellington, a township on the Adelaide road. The nearest human habitation to him at that time, 1829, must have been nearly 700 miles away as the crow flies. Now, if he stood there, he would be able to take coach to the city of Adelaide, fifty miles distant, containing 25,000 inhabitants, and would pass through a beautiful settled country all the way. Or he could get on board one of the fleet of steamers which now ply on this river, and might go up in her above a thousand miles into the network of rivers which spread out of the Murray and the Darling.

Lake Alexandrina was the name he gave to this beautiful lake, fifty

miles in length, across which they sailed in one day, and at sunset heard the surf bursting in on the sand. The next day they went down to the shore, and bathed in the great Southern Ocean.

There was no available passage into the sea. Had there been, Sturt thinks he would have made for Van Dieman's Land. As it was, he was eight hundred miles from help, with failing provisions and sickening men, a strong current, a danger of natives, who had by this time repented allowing them to pass, and violent physical pain of his own to contend with. Was ever man in such a case ?

The men could not have rowed all the way, as became evident afterwards. God, it seemed, would not have the expedition perish, and most unexpectedly He sent a strong south wind, which lashed the broad lake and the long reaches of the Murray into waves, and before which they hoisted their sail and sped away homewards, across the solitary lake, among the swift sea-fowl, as though their whale-boat was seized with a panic as soon as they turned, and was flying for life.

At last the breeze died away and the weary rowing began ; but the wind had just made the difference between safety and ruin. They had a row before them of seven hundred miles, on bread and water. They reached the Great Bend twenty days after they had left it, and turned the boat's head eastward. From thence to the junction with the Darling they were frequently in danger from the natives, but no accident occurred. They rowed on with failing strength, frequently sleeping while labouring at the oar, through intensely hot weather, and with the growing terror of the rapid, which had nearly shipwrecked them before, getting only stronger as they approached it.

At last they reached it. Their most desperate efforts were utterly unavailing ; they were up to their armpits in water, holding their boat in the lee of a rock, where they were suddenly surrounded by hundreds of armed natives. They were utterly defenceless, and the

captain thought that the end of it all was come in good earnest this time. But the natives remained silent, resting on their spears, and Sturt heard the deep voice he knew so well—the voice of the native who had saved them before. This noble fellow was there again, just at their extremest need.

With the help of the natives they got their boat through, and went on. Noticeable at this point is this circumstance :—The sugar had run short, and there was but six pounds remaining. The convicts and soldiers unanimously begged Sturt and Macleay to keep it for their own use. Now what sort of convicts and soldiers were those who did this ? And what sort of men were they who brought them into this temper ? These extracts too, are worth keeping, as exhibiting character :—“ We were not always equal to a trial of temper (with the blacks) after our day's work.” And about the blacks again—“ They lay down close to our tents, or around our fire. When they were apparently asleep I watched them narrowly. Macnamee was walking up and down with his firelock, and every time he turned his back one of the natives rose gently and poised his spear at him ; and, as soon as he thought Macnamee was about to turn, he dropped as quietly into his place. When I say the native got up, I do not mean that he stood up, but that he raised himself sufficiently for the purpose he had in view. His spear would not, therefore, have gone with much force ; but I determined it should not quit his hand, for, had I observed any actual attempt to throw it, I should unquestionably have shot him dead upon the spot.”

We return to him entering the Murrumbidgee, since leaving which they had rowed 1,500 miles, through an unknown desert country. Pause and think of this an instant ; it is really worth while to do so. On the fifty-fifth day from their leaving it, they re-entered the narrow, gloomy channel of the tributary : the navigation was much obstructed, in consequence of the river having fallen. On the seventy-seventh day, having reached

the place where the whaleboat had been launched, after a voyage of 2,000 miles, they met with their greatest disappointment. Their companions were not there. The drays had failed to meet them, and the dépôt was deserted.

The men lost heart now for the first time. The river suddenly rose, and for seventeen terrible days longer they rowed without energy—almost without hope—against a swift current. They became terribly haggard, and at last the first man went mad, and showed the others the terrible fate in store for them, and forced them, in addition to their own gloomy thoughts, to listen to the raving of a lunatic. The mind of the chief himself became a little off its balance. With his noble simplicity he says:—"I became captious, and found fault when there was no occasion, and lost the equilibrium of my temper in contemplating the condition of my companions. . . . No murmur, however, escaped them. Macleay preserved his good humour to the last."

At Hamilton Plains, being still ninety miles from assistance by land, they abandoned the boat and took to the bush. It became necessary to send the two strongest men for assistance. Hopkinson and Mulholland were honoured by the selection, and the others remained camped. On the eighth day Sturt served out the last ounce of flour, and prepared

to move his foodless and exhausted men on the way towards assistance. Suddenly there was a shout, and they knew that aid was come one way or another. Hopkinson and Mulholland had found the drays; and then these noble fellows, disregarding their fearful condition, had hastened back with a few necessities to their chief, to fall utterly exhausted on the ground before him, but to tell him with smiling faces that he was saved.

The two great successful river-adventures of this century are undoubtedly Sturt's discovery of the Murray and Speke's discovery of the source of the Nile. But Sturt's discovery has of course led to commercial results far greater than any which can come from that of Speke. The Murray, draining a basin nearly equal to that of the true Mississippi (omitting the Missouri and Arkansas basins) is now covered with steamboats, and flows through three splendid republics, whose presidents are nominated by the British Crown. No city stands on the Murray, in consequence of the unfortunate bar at the mouth, and so the dockyards required by the fleet of steamers are on Lake Victoria. But the beautiful city of Adelaide is but seventy miles off, and now, unless I am mistaken, connected with it by the Goolwa railway. And Charles Sturt has earned for himself the title of the father of Australian exploration.

A SON OF THE SOIL.

PART XIV.

CHAPTER XL.

"It's hard to ken what to say," said the Mistress, going to the window for the hundredth time, and looking out wistfully upon the sky which shone dazzling over the Holy Loch with the excessive pathetic brightness of exceptional sunshine. "I canna make out for my part if he's broken-hearted or no, and a word wrong just at a moment like this would be hard on the callant. It's a wonderful mercy it's such a bonnie day. That's aye a blessing both to the body and the mind."

"Well, it's you that Colin takes after," said the farmer of Ramore, with an undertone of dissatisfaction; "so there's no saying but what the weather may count for something. I've lost understanding for my part of a lad that gangs abroad for his health, and gets himself engaged to be married. In my days, when marriage came into a man's head, he went through with it, and there was an end of the subject. For my part, I dinna pretend to understand your newfangled ways."

"Eh, Colin, dinna be so unfeeling," said the Mistress, roused to remonstrance. "You were like to gang out of your mind about the marriage when you thought it was to be; and now you're ready to sneer at the poor laddie, as if he could help it. It's hard when his ain friends turn against him after the ingratitude he's met wi', and the disappointment he's had to bear."

"You may trust a woman for uphaudin' her son in such like nonsense," said big Colin. "The only man o' sense among them that I can see was yon Mr. Meredith that took the lassie away. What the deevil had Colin to do with a wife, and him no a penny in his pouch? But in the meantime yonder's the steamboat, and I'm gaun down to

meet them. If I were you I would stop still here. You're no that strong," said the farmer, looking upon his wife with a certain secret tenderness. "I would stop still at hame if I were you. It's aye the best welcome for a callant to see his mother at her ain door."

With which big Colin of Ramore strode downwards to the beach, where his sons were launching their own boat to meet the little steamer by which Colin was coming home. His wife looked after him with mingled feelings as he went down the brae. He had been a little hard upon Colin for these six months past, and had directed many a covert sarcasm at the young man who had gone so far out of the ordinary course as to seek health in Italy. The farmer did not believe in any son of his needing such an expedient; and, in proportion as it seemed unnecessary to his own vigorous strength, and ignorance of weakness, he took opportunity for jeers and jests which were to the mother's keen ears much less good-natured than they seemed to be. And then he had been very angry on the receipt of Colin's letter announcing his intended marriage, and it was with difficulty Mrs. Campbell had prevented her husband from sending in return such an answer as might have banished Colin for ever from his father's house. Now all these clouds had blown past, and no harm had come of them, and he was coming home as of old. His brothers were launching the boat on the beach, and his father had gone down to meet the stranger. The Mistress stood at her door, restraining her eagerness and anxiety as best she could, and obeying her husband's suggestion, as women do so often, by way of propitiating him, and bespeaking tenderness and forbearance for her boy. For indeed the old times had passed away, with all their natural family glad-

ness, and union clouded by no sense of difference. Now it was a man of independent thoughts, with projects and pursuits of his own differing from theirs, and with a mind no doubt altered and matured by those advantages of travel which the Mistress regarded in her ignorance with a certain awe, who was coming back to Ramore. Colin had made so many changes, while so few had occurred at home; and even a bystander, less anxious than his mother, might have had reason to inquire and wonder how the matured and travelled son would look upon his unprogressive home.

It was now the end of September, though Colin had left Rome in May; but then his Snell Scholarship was intended to give him the advantage of travel, and specially that peculiar advantage of attendance at a German University which is so much prized in Scotland. He had accordingly passed the intervening months in a little German town, getting up the language and listening to lectures made doubly misty by imperfect understanding of the tongue. The process left Colin's theological ideas very much where it found them—which is to say, in a state of general vagueness and uncertainty; but then he had always the advantage of being able to say that he had studied at Dickofptenberg. Lauderdale had left his friend after spending, not without satisfaction, his hundred pounds, and was happily re-established in the "honourable situation" which he had quitted on Colin's account; or, if not in that precise post, at least in a cognate appointment, the nature of which came to Colin's ears afterwards; and the young man was now returning home alone, to spend a little time with his family before he returned to his studies. The Mistress watched him land from the boat, with her heart beating so loudly in her ears that no other sound was audible; and Colin did not lose much time in ascending the brae where she stood awaiting him. "But you should not have left your father," Mrs. Campbell said, even in the height of her happi-

ness. "He's awfu' proud to see you home, Colin, my man!" Big Colin, however, was no way displeased in his own person by his son's desertion. He came up leisurely after him, not without a thrill of conscious satisfaction. The farmer was sufficiently disposed to scoff aloud at his son's improved looks, at his beard, and his dress, and all the little particulars which made a visible difference between the present Colin and the awkward country lad of two years ago; but in his heart he made involuntary comparisons, and privately concluded that the minister's son was far from being Colin's equal, and that even the heir and pride of the Duke would have little to boast of in presence of the farmer's son of Ramore. This—though big Colin would not for any earthly inducement have owned the sentiment—made him regard his son's actions and intentions unawares with eyes more lenient and gracious. No contemptible weakness of health or delicacy of appearance appeared in the sunburnt countenance, so unexpectedly garnished by a light-brown, crisp, abundant beard—a beard of which, to tell the truth, Colin himself was rather proud, all the more as it had by rare fortune escaped that intensification of colour which is common to men of his complexion. The golden glitter which lighted up the great waves of brown hair over his forehead had not deepened into red on his chin, as it had done in Archie's young but vigorous whiskers. His complexion, though not so ruddy as his brother's, had the tone of perfect health and vigour, untouched by any shade of fatigue or weakness. He was not going to be the "delicate" member of the family, as the farmer had foreboded, with a strange mixture of contempt in his feelings; for, naturally, to be delicate included a certain weakness of mind as well as of body to the healthful dwellers in Ramore.

"You'll find but little to amuse you here after a' your travels," the farmer said. "We're aye busy about the beasts, Archie and me. I'll no say it's an elevating study, like yours; but it's

awfu' necessary in our occupation. For my part, I'm no above a kind o' pride in my cattle; and there's your mother, she's set her shoulder to the wheel and won a prize."

"Ay, Colin," said the Mistress, hastening to take up her part in the conversation, "it's aye grand to be doing something. And it's no' me but Gowans that's won the prize. She was aye a weel-conditioned creature, that it was a pleasure to have anything to do with; but there's plenty of time to speak about the beasts. You're sure you're weel and strong yourself, Colin, my man? for that's the first thing now we've got you hame."

"There doesna look much amiss with him," said the farmer, with an inarticulate growl. "Your mother's awfu' keen for somebody to pet and play wi'; but there's a time for a' thing; and a callant, even, though he's brought up for a minister, maun find out when he's a man."

"I should hope there was no doubt of that," said Colin. "I'm getting on for two-and-twenty, mother, and strong enough for anything. Thanks to Harry Frankland for a splendid holiday; and now I mean to settle down to work."

Here big Colin again interjected an inarticulate exclamation. "I ken little about your kind of work," said the discontented father; "but, if I were you, when I wanted a bit exercise I would take a hand at the plough, or some-wise-like occupation, instead of picking fools out of canals—or even out of lochs, for that matter," he added, with a subdued thrill of pride. "Sir Thomas is aye awfu' civil when he comes here; and, as for that bonnie little creature that's aye with him, she comes chirping about the place with her fine English, as if she belonged to it. I never can make out what she and your mother have such long cracks about."

"Miss Frankland?" said Colin, with a bright look of interest. The Mistress had been so much startled by this unexpected speech of her husband, that she turned right round upon Colin with an anxious face, eager to know what

effect an intimation so sudden might have upon him. For the farmer's wife believed in true love and in first love with all her heart, and had never been able to divest herself of the idea that it was partly pique and disappointment in respect to Miss Matty which had driven her son into so hasty an engagement. "Is she still Miss Frankland?" continued the unsuspicious Colin. "I thought she would have been married by this time. She is a little witch," the young man said with a conscious smile—"but I owe her a great many pleasant hours. She was always the life of Wodensbourne. Were they here this year?" he asked; and then another thought struck him. "Hollo! it's only September," said Colin; "I ought to ask, Are they here now?"

"Oh, ay, Colin, they're here now," said the Mistress, "and couldna be more your friends if you were one of the family. I'm no clear in my mind that thae two will ever be married. No that I ken of any obstacle—but, so far as I can see, a bright bonny creature like that, aye full of life and spirit, is nae match for the like of him."

"I do not see that," said the young man who once was Matty Frankland's worshipper. "She is very bright, as you say; but he is the more honest of the two. I used to be jealous of Harry Frankland," said Colin, laughing; "he seemed to have everything that was lacking to me; but I have changed my mind since then. One gets to believe in compensations," said the young man; and he shut his hand softly where it rested on the table, as if he felt in it the tools which a dozen Harry Franklands could have made no use of. But this thought was but dimly intelligible to his hearers, to one of whom, at least, the word "jealous" was limited in its meaning; and, viewed in this light, the sentiment just expressed by Colin was hard to understand.

"I'm no fond of what folk call compensations," said the Mistress. "A loss is aye a loss, whatever onybody can say. Siller that's lost may be made up for, but naething more precious. It's

aye an awfu' marvel to me that chapter about Job getting other bairns to fill the place o' the first. I would rather have the dead loss and the vacant place," said the tender woman, with tears in her eyes, "than a' your compensations. One can never stand for another—it's awfu' infidelity to think it. If I canna have happiness, I'll be content with sorrow; but you're no to speak of compensations to me."

"No," said Colin, laying his hand caressingly on his mother's; "but I was not speaking of either love or loss. I meant only that for Harry Frankland's advantages over me, I might, perhaps, have a little balance on my side. For example, I picked him out of the canal, as my father says," the young man went on laughing; "but never mind the Franklands; I suppose I shall have to see them, as they are here."

"Weel, Colin, you can please yourself," said his father. "I'm no' a man to court the great, but an English baronet, like Sir Thomas, is aye a creditable acquaintance for a callant like you; and he's aye awfu' civil as I was saying; but the first thing to be sure of is what you mean to do. You have had the play for near a year, and it doesna appear to me that tutorships, and that kind of thing, are the right training for a minister. You'll go back to your studies, and go through with them without more interruptions, if you'll be guided by me."

But at this point Colin paused, and had a good many explanations to give. His heart was set on the Balliol scholarship, which he had once given up for Matty's sake; but now there was another chance for him, which had arisen unexpectedly. This it was which had hastened his return home. As for his father, the farmer yielded with but little demur to this proposal. A clear Scotch head, even when it begins to lose its sense of the ideal, and to become absorbed in "the beasts," seldom deceives itself as to the benefits of education; and big Colin had an intense secret confidence in the powers of his son. Honours at Oxford, in the imagination

of the Scotch farmer, were a visionary avenue leading to any impossible altitude. He made a little resistance for appearance sake, but he was in reality more excited by the idea of the conflict—first, for the scholarship itself; then for all possible prizes and honours to the glory of Scotland and Ramore—than was Colin himself.

"But after a year's play you're no qualified," he said, with a sense of speaking ironically, which was very pleasant to his humour. "A competition's an awfu' business; your rivals that have aye been keeping at it will be better qualified than you."

At which Colin smiled, as his father meant him to smile, and answered, "I am not afraid," more modestly a great deal than the farmer in his heart was answering for him; but then an unexpected antagonist arose.

"I dinna pretend to ken a great deal about Oxford," said the Mistress, whose brow was clouded; "but it's an awfu' put-off of time as far as I can see. I'm no fond of spending the best of life in idle learning. Weel, weel, maybe its no idle learning for them that can spare the time; but for a lad that's no out of the thought of settling for himself and doing his duty to his fellow-creatures—I was reading in a book no that long ago," said Colin's mother, "about thae fellowships and things, and of men so misguided as to stay on and live to be poor bachelor bodies, with their Greek and their Latin, and no mortal use in this world. Eh, Colin, laddie, if that was a' that was to come of you!"

"You're keen to see your son in a pulpit, like the rest of the silly women," said the farmer; "for my part, I'm no that bigoted to the kirk; if he could do better for himsel'——"

But at this juncture the Mistress got up with a severe countenance, laying aside the stocking she was knitting. "Eh, Colin, if you wouldn't get so worldly," cried the anxious mother. "I'm no one that's aye thinking of a callant bettering himself. If he's taken arles in one service, would you have

him desert and gang over to another? For me, I would like to see my laddie faithful to his first thoughts. I'm no saying faithful to his Master, for a man may be that though he's no a minister," continued the Mistress; "but I canna bear to see broken threads; be one thing or be another, but dinna melt away and be nothing at a'," the indignant woman concluded abruptly, moving away to set things in order in the room before they all retired for the night. It was the faint, far-off, and impossible idea of her son settling down into one of the Fellowships of which Mrs. Campbell had been reading which moved her to this little outburst. Her authority probably was some disrespectful novel or magazine article, and that was all the idea she had formed in her ignorance of the nurseries of learning. Colin, however, was so far of her mind that he responded at once.

"I don't mean to give up my profession, mother; I only mean to be all the more fit for it," he said. "I should never hesitate if I had to choose between the two."

"Hear him and his fine talk," said the farmer, getting up in his turn with a laugh. "It would be a long time before our minister, honest man, would speak of his profession. Leave him to himself, Jeanie. He kens what he's doing; that's to say, he has an awfu' ambition considering that he's only your son and mine," said big Colin of Ramore; and he went out to take a last look at his beasts with a thrill of secret pride which he would not for any reward have expressed in words. He was only a humble Westland farmer looking after his beasts, and she was but his true wife, a helpmeet no way above her natural occupations; but there was no telling what the boy might be, though he was only "your son and mine." As for Colin the younger, he went up to his room half an hour later, after the family had made their homely thanksgiving for his return, smiling in himself at the unaccountable contraction of that little chamber, which he had once shared with Archie without

finding it too small. Many changes and many thoughts had come and gone since he last lay down under its shelving roof. Miss Matty who had danced away like a will-o'-the-wisp, leaving no trace behind her; and Alice who had won no such devotion, yet whose soft shadow lay upon him still; and then there was the deathbed of Meredith, and his own almost deathbed at Wodensbourne, and all the thoughts that belonged to these. Such influences and imaginations mature a man unawares. While he sat recalling all that had passed since he left this nest of his childhood, the Mistress tapped softly at his door, and came in upon him with wistful eyes. She would have given all she had in the world for the power of reading her son's heart at that moment, and, indeed, there was little in it which Colin would have objected to reveal to his mother. But the two human creatures were constrained to stand apart from each in the bonds of their individual nature—to question timidly and answer vaguely, and make queries which were all astray from the truth. The Mistress came behind her son and laid one hand on his shoulder, and with the other caressed and smoothed back the waves of brown hair of which she had always been so proud. "Your hair is just as long as ever, Colin," said the admiring mother; "but its no a' your mother's now," she said with a soft, little sigh. She was standing behind him that her eyes might not disconcert her boy, meaning to woo him into confidence and the opening of his heart.

"I don't know who else cares for it," said Colin; and then he too was glad to respond to the unasked question. "My poor Alice," he said; "if I could but have brought her to you, mother—She would have been a daughter to you."

Mrs. Campbell sighed. "Eh, Colin, I'm awfu' hard-hearted," she said; "I canna believe in ony woman ever taking that place. I'm awfu' bigoted to my ain; but she would have been dearly welcome for my laddie's sake; and I'm

real anxious to hear how it a' was. It was but little you said in your letters, and a' this night I've been wanting to have you to mysel', and to hear all that there was to say."

"I don't know what there is to say," said Colin; "I must have written all about it. Her position, of course, made no difference to my feelings," he went on, rather hotly, like a man who in his own consciousness stands somewhat on his defence; "but it made us hasten matters. I thought if I could only have brought her home to you——"

"It was aye you for a kind thought," said the Mistress; "but she would have had little need of the auld mother when she had the son; and Colin, my man, is it a' ended now?"

"Heaven knows!" said Colin with a little impatience. "I have written to her through her father, and I have written to her by herself, and all that I have had from her is one little letter saying that her father had forbidden all further intercourse between us, and bidding me farewell; but——"

"But," said the Mistress, "it's no of her own will; she's faithful in her heart? And if she's true to you, you'll be true to her? Isna that what you mean?"

"I suppose so," said Colin; and then he made a little pause. "There never was any one so patient and so dutiful," he said. "When poor Arthur died, it was she who forgot herself to think of us. Perhaps even this is not so hard upon her as one thinks."

"Eh, but I was thinking first of my ain, like a heartless woman as I am," said his mother. "I've been thinking it was hard on *you*."

He did not turn round his face to her as she had hoped; but her keen eyes could see the heightened colour which tinged even his neck and his forehead. "Yes," said Colin; "but for my part," he added, with a little effort, "it is chiefly Alice I have been thinking of. It may seem vain to say so, but she will have less to occupy her thoughts than I shall have, and—and the time may hang heavier.—You don't

like me to go to Oxford, mother?"

This question was said with a little jerk, as of a man who was pleased to plunge into a new subject; and the Mistress was far too close an observer not to understand what her son meant.

"I like whatever is good for you, Colin," she said; "but it was aye in the thought of losing time. I'm no meaning real loss of time. I'm meaning I was thinking of mair hurry than there is. But you're both awfu' young, and I like whatever is for your good, Colin," said the tender mother. She kept folding back his heavy locks as she spoke, altogether disconcerted and at a loss, poor soul; for Colin's calmness did not seem to his mother quite consistent with his love; and a possibility of a marriage without that foundation was to Mrs. Campbell the most hideous of all suppositions. And then, like a true woman as she was, she went back to her little original romance, and grew more confused than ever.

"I'm maybe an awfu' foolish woman," she said, with an attempt at a smile, which Colin was somehow conscious of, though he did not see it, "but, even if I am, you'll no be angry at your mother. Colin, my man, maybe it's no the best thing for you that thae folk at the castle should be here?"

"Which folk at the castle?" said Colin, who had honestly forgotten for the moment. "Oh, the Franklands! What should it matter to me?"

This time he turned round upon her with eyes of unabashed surprise, which the Mistress found herself totally unprepared to meet. It was now her turn to falter, and stammer, and break down.

"Eh, Colin, it's so hard to ken," said the Mistress. "The heart's awfu' deceitful. I'm no saying one thing or another; for I canna read what you're thinking, though you are my ain laddie; but if you were to think it best no to enter into temptation——"

"Meaning Miss Matty?" said Colin; and he laughed with such entire freedom that his mother was first silenced and then offended by his levity. "No fear

of that, mother; and then she has Harry, I suppose, to keep her right."

"I'm no so clear about that," said Mrs. Campbell, nettled, notwithstanding her satisfaction, by her son's indifference; "he's away abroad somewhere; but I would not say but what there might be another," she continued, with natural *esprit du corps*, which was still more irritated by Colin's calm response,—

"Or two or three others," said the young man; "but, for all that, you are quite right to stand up for her, mother; only I am not in the least danger. No, I must get to work," said Colin; "hard work, without any more nonsense; but I'd like to show those fellows that a man may choose to be a Scotch minister though he is Fellow of an English college—"

The Mistress interrupted her son with the nearest approach to a scream which her Scotch self-control would admit of. "A Fellow of an English college," she said, in dismay, "and you troth-plighted to an innocent young woman that trusts in you, Colin! That I should ever live to hear such words out of the mouth of a son of mine!"

And, notwithstanding his explanations, the Mistress retired to her own room, ill at ease, and with a sense of coming trouble. "A man that's engaged to be married shouldna be thinking of such an awfu' off-put of time," she said to herself; "and ah, if the poor lassie is aye trusting to his coming, and looking for him day by day." This thought took away from his mother half the joy of Colin's return. Perhaps her cherished son, too, was growing "worldly," like his father, who thought of the "beasts" even in his dreams. And, as for Colin himself, he, too, felt the invisible curb upon his free actions, and chafed at it in the depths of his heart when he was alone. With all this world of work and ambition before him, it was hard to feel upon his proud neck that visionary rein. Though Alice had set him free in her little letter, it was still in her soft fingers that this shadowy bond remained. He had not repudiated it, even in his most secret thoughts; but, as soon as he

began to act independently, he became conscious of the bondage, and in his heart resented it. If he had brought her home, as he had intended, to his father's house, his young dependent wife, he probably would have felt much less clearly how he had thus forestalled the future, and mortgaged his very life.

CHAPTER XLI.

THE Balliol Scholarship was, however, too important a reality to leave the young candidate much time to consider his position—and Colin's history would be too long, even for the patience of his friends, if we were to enter into this part of his life in detail. Everybody knows he won the scholarship; and, indeed, neither that, nor his subsequent career at Balliol, are matters to be recorded, since the chronicle has been already made in those popular University records which give their heroes a reputation, no doubt temporary, but while it lasts of the highest possible flavour. He had so warm a greeting from Sir Thomas Frankland that it would have been churlish on Colin's part had he declined the invitations he received to the Castle, where, indeed, Miss Matty did not want him just at that moment. Though she was not the least in the world in love with him, it is certain that between the intervals of her other amusements in that *genre*, the thought of Colin had often occurred to her mind. She thought of him with a wonderful gratitude and tenderness sometimes, as of a man who had actually loved her with the impossible love—and sometimes with a ring of pleasant laughter, not far removed from tears. Anything "between them" was utterly impossible, of course—but, perhaps, all the more for that, Miss Matty's heart, so much as there was remaining of it, went back to Colin in its vacant moments, as to a green spot upon which she could repose herself, and set down her burden of vanities for the instant. This very sentiment, however, made her little inclined to have him at the Castle,

where there was at present a party staying, including, at least, one man of qualifications worthy a lady's regard. Harry and his cousin had quarrelled so often that their quarrel at last was serious, and the new man was cleverer than Harry, and not so hard to amuse; but it was difficult to go over the well-known ground with which Miss Frankland was so familiar in presence of one whom she had put through the process in a still more captivating fashion, and who was still sufficiently interested to note what she was doing, and to betray that he noted it. Colin, himself, was not so conscious of observing his old love in her new love-making as she was conscious of his observation; and, though it was only a glance now and then, a turn of the head, or raising of the eyes, it was enough to make her awkward by moments, an evidence of feeling for which Miss Matty could not forgive herself. Colin consequently was not thrown into temptation in the way his mother dreaded. The temptation he was thrown into was one of a much more subtle character. He threw himself into his work, and the preparations for his work, with all the energy of his character; he felt himself free to follow out the highest visions of life that had formed themselves among his youthful dreams. He thought of the new study on which he was about to enter, and the honours upon which he already calculated in his imagination as but stepping stones to what lay after, and offered himself up with a certain youthful effusion and superabundance to his Church and his country, for which he had assuredly something to do more than other men. And then, when Colin had got so far as this, and was tossing his young head proudly in the glory of his intentions, there came a little start and shiver, and that sense of the curb, which had struck him first after his confidence with his mother, returned to his mind. But the bondage seemed to grow more and more visionary as he went on. Alice had given him up, so to speak; she was debarred by her father from any correspondence with him, and might,

for anything Colin knew, gentle and yielding as she was, be made to marry some one else by the same authority; and, though he did not discuss the question with himself in words, it became more and more hard to Colin to contemplate the possibility of having to abridge his studies and sacrifice his higher aims to the necessity of getting settled in life. If he were "settled in life" to-morrow, it could only be as an undistinguished Scotch minister, poor, so far as money was concerned, and with no higher channel either to use or fame; and, at his age, to be only like his neighbours was irksome to the young man. Those neighbours, or at least the greater part of them, were good fellows enough in their way. So far as a vague general conception of life and its meaning went, they were superior as a class in Colin's opinion to the class represented by that gentle curate of Wodensbourne, whose soul was absorbed in the restoration of his Church, and the fit states of mind for the Sundays after Trinity; but there were also particulars in which, as a class, they were inferior to that mild and gentlemanly Anglican. As for Colin, he had not formed his ideal on any curate or even bishop of the wealthier Church. Like other fervent young men, an eager discontent with everything he saw lay the bottom of his imaginations; and it was the development of Christianity—"more chivalrous, more magnanimous, than that of modern times"—that he thought of. A dangerous condition of mind, no doubt; and the people round him would have sneered much at Colin and his ambition had he put it into words; but, after all, it was an ideal worth contemplating which he presented to himself. In the midst of these thoughts, and of all the future possibilities of life, it was a little hard to be suddenly stopped short, and reminded of Mariana in her moated grange, sighing, "He does not come." If he did come, making all the unspeakable sacrifices necessary to that end, as his mother seemed to think he should, the probabilities were that the door of the grange

would be closed upon him; and who could tell but that Alice, always so docile, might be diverted even from the thought of him by some other suitor presented to her by her father? Were Colin's hopes to be sacrificed to her possible faith, and the possible relenting of Mr. Meredith? And, alas! amid all the new impulses that were rising within him, there came again the vision of that woman in the clouds, whom as yet, though he had been in love with Matty Frankland, and had all but married Alice Meredith, Colin had never seen. She kissed her shadowy hand to him by times out of those rosy vapours which floated among the hills when the sun had gone down, and twilight lay sweet over the Holy Loch—and beckoned him on, on, to the future and the distance where she was. When the apparition had glanced out upon him after this old fashion, Colin felt all at once the jerk of the invisible bridle on his neck, and chafed at it; and then he shut his eyes wilfully, and rushed on faster than before, and did his best to ignore the curb. After all, it was no curb if it were rightly regarded. Alice had released, and her father had rejected him, and he had been accused of fortune-hunting, and treated like a man unworthy of consideration. So far as external circumstances went, no one could blame him for inconstancy, no one could imagine that the engagement thus broken was, according to any code of honour, binding upon Colin; but yet— This was the uncomfortable state of mind in which he was when he finally committed himself to the Balliol Scholarship, and thus put off that "settling in life" which the Mistress thought due to Alice. When the matter was concluded, however, the young man became more comfortable. At all events, until the termination of his studies, no decision, one way or other, could be expected from him; and it would still be two years before Alice was of the age to decide for herself. He discussed the matter—so far as he ever permitted himself to discuss it with any one—with Lauderdale, who managed

to spend the last Sunday with him at Ramore. It was only October, but winter had begun betimes, and a sprinkling of snow lay on the hills at the head of the loch. The water itself, all crisped and brightened by a slight breeze and a frosty sun, lay dazzling between its grey banks, reflecting every shade of colour upon them; the russet lines of wood with which their little glens were outlined, and the yellow patches of stubble, or late corn, still unreaped, that made the lights of the landscape, and relieved the hazy green of the pastures, and the brown waste of withered bracken and heather above. The wintry day, the clearness of the frosty air, and the touch of snow on the hills, gave to the Holy Loch that touch of colour which is the only thing ever wanting to its loveliness; a colour cold, it is true, but in accordance with the scene. The waves came up with a lively cadence on the beach, and the wind blew showers of yellow leaves in the faces of the two friends as they walked home together from the church. Sir Thomas had detained them in the first place, and after him the minister, who had emerged from his little vestry in time for half an hour's conversation with his young parishioner, who was something of a hero on the Holy Loch—a hero, and yet subject to the inevitable touch of familiar depreciation which belongs to a prophet in his own country. The crowd of church-goers had dispersed from the roads when the two turned their faces towards Ramore. Perhaps by reason of the yew-trees under which they had to pass, perhaps because this Sunday, too, marked a crisis, it occurred to both of them to think of their walk through the long ilex avenues of the Frascati villa, the Sunday after Meredith's death. It was Lauderdale, as was natural, who returned to that subject the first.

"It's a wee hard to believe that it's the same world," he said, "and that you and me are making our way to Ramore, and not to yon painted cha'amer, and our friend, with her distaff in her hand. I'm whiles no clear in my mind that we were ever there."

At which Colin was a little impatient, as was natural. "Don't be fantastic," he said. "It does not matter about Sora Antonia ; but there are other things not so easily dropped ;" and here the young man paused and uttered a sigh, which arose half from a certain momentary longing for the gentle creature to whom his faith was plighted, and half from an irksome sense of the disadvantages of having plighted his faith.

"Ay," said Lauderdale, "I'm no fond myself of dropping threads like that. There's nae telling when they may be joined again, or how ; but if it's ony comfort to you, Colin, I'm a great believer in sequences. I never put ony faith in things breaking off clean in an arbitrary way. Thae two didna enter your life to be put out again by the will of an old fool of a father. I'll no say that I saw the requirements of Providence just as clear as you thought you did, but I canna put faith in an ending like what's happened. You and her are awfu' young. You have time to wait."

"Time to wait," repeated Colin in his impatience ; "there is something more needed than time. Mr. Meredith has returned me my last letter with a request that I should not trouble his daughter again. You do not think a man can go on in the face of that."

"He's naething but a jailor, callant," said Lauderdale ; "no that I am saying anything against an honourable occupation," he continued, after a moment's pause, with a grim smile crossing his face ; "there was a man at Ephesus in that way of living that I've aye had an awfu' respect for—but the poor bit bonnie bird in the cage is neither art nor part in that. When the time comes we'll a' ken better ; and here, in the meantime, you are making another beginning of your life."

"It appears to me I am always making beginnings," said Colin. "It was much such a day as this when Harry Frankland fell into the loch—that was a kind of beginning in its way. Wodensbourne was a beginning, and so was Italy—and now— It appears life is made up of such."

"You're no so far wrong there," said Lauderdale ; "but it's grand to make the new start like you, with a' heaven and earth on your side. I've kent them that had to set their face to the brae with baith earth and heaven against them—or any way so it seemed. It's ill getting new images," said the philosopher meditatively. "I wonder who it was first found out that life was a journey. It's no an original idea nowadays, but its aye awfu' true. A man sets out with a hantle mair things than he needs, *impedimenta* of a' kinds ; but he leaves the maist of them behind afore he's reached the middle of the road. You've an awfu' body of opinions, callant, besides other things to dispose o'. I'm thinking Oxford will do you good for that. You're no likely to take up with their superfluities, and you'll get rid of some of your ain."

"I don't know what you call superfluities," said Colin. "I don't think I am a man of many opinions. A few things are vital and cannot be dispensed with, and these you are quite as distinct upon as I can be. However, I don't go to Oxford to learn that."

"I'm awfu' curious to ken in a general way," said Lauderdale, "what you are going to Oxford to learn. Latin and Greek and Mathematics ? You're no a bad hand at the classics, callant. I would like to ken what it was that you were meaning to pay three good years of life to learn."

Upon which Colin laughed, and felt without knowing why, a flush come to his cheek. "If I should prefer to win my spurs somewhere else than at home," said the young man lightly, "should you wonder at that ? Beside, the English universities have a greater reputation than ours—and in short—"

"For idle learning," said Lauderdale with a little heat ; "not for the science of guiding men, which, so far as I can see, is what you're aiming at. No that I'm the man to speak ony blasphemy against the dead languages," said the philosopher, "if the like of that was to be your trade ; but for a Scotch parish, or maybe a Scotch presbytery—or in the

course of time, if a' goes well, an Assembly of the Kirk——"

"Stuff," cried Colin; "does not all mental discipline train a man, whatever his destination may be? Besides," the young man said with a laugh, half of pride, half of shame, "I want to show these fellows that a man may win their honours and carry them back to the old Church, which they talk about in a benevolent way, as if it was in the South Sea Islands. Well, that is my weakness. I want to bring their prizes back here, and wear them at home."

"The callant's crazy," said Lauderdale, but the idea was sufficiently in accord with his national sentiments to be treated with indulgence; "but, as for sticking a wheen useless feathers into the douce bonnet of a sober old Kirk like ours, I see nae advantage in it. It might maybe be spoiling the Egyptians," added the philosopher grimly, "but, as for ony good to us— You're like a' young creatures, callant; you're awfu' fond of the *impedimenta*. Reputation of that description is a fashionable thing to carry about, not to say that three years of a callant's life is no a time to be calculated upon. You may change your mind two or three times over between that and this."

"You have very little respect for my constancy, Lauderdale," said Colin; and then he felt irritated with himself for the word he had used. "In what respect do you suppose I can change my mind?" he asked with a little impatience; and Colin lifted his eyes full upon his friend's face, as he had learned to do when there was question of Alice, though certainly it could not be supposed that there was any question of Alice in the present case.

"Whisht, callant," said Lauderdale; "I've an awfu' trust in your constancy. It's one o' the words I like best in the English language, or in the Scotch either for that matter. It's a kind of word that canna be slipped over among a crowd, but craves full saying and a' its letters sounded. As I was saying," he continued, changing his tone, "I'm a great believer in sequences; there's

mony new beginnings, but there's nae absolute end short of dying, which is aye an end for this world, so far as a man can see. And, next to God and Christ, which are the grand primitive necessities, without which no man can take his journey, I'm aye for counting true love and good faith. I wouldna say but what a' the rest were more or less *impedimenta*," said Lauderdale; "but that's no the question under discussion. You might change your mind upon a' the minor matters, and no be inconstant. For example, you might be drawn in your mind to the English kirk after three years; or you might come to think you were destined for nae kirk at all, but for other occupations in this world; and, as for me, I wouldna blame you. As long as you're true to your Master—and next to yoursel'—and next to them that trust you," said Colin's faithful counsellor; "and of that I've no fear."

"I did not think of setting the question on such a solemn basis," said Colin with an amount of irritation which annoyed himself, and which he could not subdue; "however, time will show; and here we are at Ramore." Indeed the young man was rather glad to be so near Ramore. This talk of constancy exasperated him, he could not tell how; for, to be sure, he meant no inconstancy. Yet, when the sunset came again, detaching rosy cloudlets from the great masses of vapour, and shedding a mist of gold and purple over the hills—and when those wistful stretches of "daffodil sky" opened out over the western ramparts of the Holy Loch—Colin turned his eyes from the wonderful heavens as if from a visible enemy. Was not she there as always, that impossible woman, wooing him on into the future, into the unimaginable distance where somewhere she might be found any day waiting him? He turned his back upon the west, and went down of his own will to the dark shade of the yew-trees, which were somehow like the ilex alleys of the sweet Alban hills; but even there he carried his impatience with him, and

found it best on the whole to go home and give himself up to the home talk of Ramore, in which many questions were discussed unconnected with the beasts, but where this one fundamental question was for the present named no more.

CHAPTER XLII.

COLIN's career at Oxford does not lie in the way of his present historian, though, to be sure, a few piquant particulars might be selected of the way in which a pair of young Scotch eyes, with a light in them somewhat akin to genius, but trained to see the realities of homely life on the Holy Loch, regarded the peculiar existence of the steady, artificial old world, and the riotous but submissive new world, which between them form a university. Colin who, like most of his countrymen, found a great deal of the "wit" of the community around him to be sheer nonsense, sometimes agreeable, sometimes much the reverse, had also like his nation a latent but powerful sense of humour, which, backed by a few prejudices, and stimulated a little by the different manners current in the class to which he himself belonged, revealed to him many wonderful absurdities in the unconscious microcosm which felt itself a universe—a revelation which restored any inequality in the balance of affairs, and made the Scotch undergraduate at his ease in his new circumstances. For his own part, he stood in quite a different position from the host of young men, most of them younger than himself, by whom he found himself surrounded. They were accomplishing without any very definite object the natural and usual course of their education—a process which everybody had to go through, and which, with more or less credit, their fathers, brothers, friends, and relatives had passed through before them. Life beyond the walls of the University had doubtless its objects more interesting than the present routine; but there was no such im-

mediate connexion between those objects and that routine as Colin had been accustomed to see in his Scotch college. As for Colin himself, he was aiming at a special end, which made his course distinct for him among his more careless companions; he was bent on the highest honours attainable by hard work and powers much above the average; and this determination would have acted as a moral shield to him against the meaner temptations of the place, even if he had not already been by disposition and habits impervious to them. The higher danger—the many temptations to which Colin, like other young men, was exposed, of contenting himself with a brilliant unproductive social reputation—were warded off from him by the settled determination with which he entered upon his work. For Scotch sentiment is very distinct on this question; and Colin understood perfectly that, if he returned with only a moderate success, his *Alma Mater* would be utterly disgusted with her pet student, and his reputation would fall to a considerably lower ebb than if he had been content to stay at home. He came upon that tranquil academic scene in the true spirit of an invader; not unfriendly—on the contrary, a keen observer of everything, an eager and interested spectator of all the peculiar habitudes of the foreign country—but chiefly bent upon snatching the laurel, as soon as that should be possible, and carrying home his spoil in triumph. He entered Oxford, in short, as the Czar Peter, had he been less a savage, might have been supposed to establish himself in the bosom of the homely English society of his time, seeing, with eyes brightened by curiosity and the novelty of the spectacle, various matters in a ridiculous light which were performed with the utmost gravity and unconsciousness by the accustomed inhabitants; and, on the other hand, discovering as many particulars from which he might borrow some advantage to his own people. Certainly, Czar Peter, who was at once an absolute monarch and the most enlightened man of his nation,

stood in a somewhat different position from the nameless Scotch student, between whom and other Scotch students no ordinary observer could have discovered much difference; but the aspirations of young men of Colin's age are fortunately unlimited by reason, and the plan he had conceived of working a revolution in his native Church and country, or, at least, aiming at that to the highest extent of his powers, was as legitimate, to say the least, as the determination to make a great fortune, with which other young men of his nation have confronted the world. Colin frequented the Oxford churches as he had frequented those in Rome, with his paramount idea in his mind, and listened to the sermons in them with that prevailing reference to the audience which he himself expected, which gave so strange an aspect to much that he heard. To be sure, it was not the best way to draw religious advantage for himself from the teachings he listened to; but yet the process was not without its benefits to the predestined priest. He seemed to himself to be looking on while the University preacher delivered his dignified periods, not to the actual assembly, but to a shrewd and steady Scotch congregation, not easily moved either to reverence or enthusiasm, and with a national sense of logic. He could not help smiling to himself when, in the midst of some elaborate piece of reasoning, the least little step aside landed the speaker upon that quagmire of ecclesiastical authority which with Colin's audience would go far to neutralize all the argument. The young man fancied he could see the elders shake their heads, and the rural philosophers remark to each other, "He maun have been awfu' ill off for an argument afore he landed upon yon." And, when the preacher proceeded to "our Church's admirable arrangements," and displayed with calm distinctness the final certainty that perfection had been absolutely attained by that venerated mother, the young Scotchman felt a prick of contradiction in his heart on his own account as well as that of

his imaginary audience. He thought to himself that the same arguments employed on behalf of the Church of Scotland would go a long way towards unsettling the national faith, and smiled within himself at the undoubting assumption which his contradictory northern soul was so far from accepting. He was not a bad emblem of his nation in this particular, at least. He consented without a remonstrance to matters of detail, such as were supposed by anybody, who had curiosity enough to inquire into the singular semi-savage religious practices of Scotland, to be specially discordant to the ideas of his country; but he laughed at "our Church's admirable arrangements" in such a manner as to set the hair of the University on end. The principles of apostolic succession and unbroken ecclesiastical descent produced in this daring young sceptic, not indignation nor argument, which might have been tolerated, but an amused disregard which was unbearable. He was always so conscious of what his Scotch audience, buried somewhere among the hills in the seclusion of a country parish, would think of such pretensions, and laughed not at the doctrine so much as at the thought of their reception of it. In this respect the young Scotchman, embodying his country, was the most contradictory of men.

He was not very much more satisfactory in the other region, where the best of Anglicans occasionally wander, and where men who hold with the firmest conviction the doctrine of apostolic succession sometimes show a strange degree of uncertainty about things more important. Colin's convictions were vague enough on a great many matters which were considered vital on the Holy Loch; and perhaps he was not a much more satisfactory hearer in his parish church at home than he was in Oxford when there was question of the descendants of the apostles. But amidst this sea of vague and undeveloped thought, which was not so much doubt as uncertainty, there stood up several rocks of absolute faith

which were utterly impervious to assault. His mind was so far conformed to his age that he could hear even these ultimate and fundamental matters canvassed by the calm philosophers about him, without any undue theological heat or passion of defence; but it soon became evident that on these points the young Scotchman was immovable, a certainty which made him an interesting study to some of his companions and teachers. It would be foolish to say that his faith procured for him that awe and respect which the popular mind takes it for granted, a company of sceptics must always feel for the one among them who retains his religious convictions. On the contrary, Colin's world was amused by his belief. It was, itself to start with, a perfectly pious, well-conducted world, saying its prayers like everybody else, and containing nothing within its placid bosom which in the least resembled the free-thinkers of ancient days. The Church was not the least in the world in danger from that mild fraternity, to which every kind of faith was a thing to be talked about, to evolve lines of thought upon, and give rise to the most refined, and acute, and charming conversation. But, as for Colin, they regarded him with an amused observation as a rare specimen of the semi-cultivated, semi-savage intelligence which is always so refreshing to a society which has refined itself to a point somewhat beyond nature. He was "a most interesting young man," and they found in him "a beautiful enthusiasm," an "engaging simplicity." As for Colin, he was quite aware of the somewhat unfounded admiration with which he was regarded, and smiled in his turn at his observers with a truer consciousness of the humour of the position than they could possibly have who saw only half of it; but he kept his shrewd Scotch eyes open all the time, and half unconsciously made himself acquainted with a great many new developments of that humanity which was to be the material of all the labours of his life. He had it in his power to remark the exact and delicate points at which Anglicanism

joined on to the newer fashion of intellectualism, and to note how a morsel of faith the less might be now and then conciliated and made up for by a morsel of observance the more; and, beside this, he became aware of the convenient possibility of dividing a man, and making him into two or three different "beings," as occasion required; so that the emotional human being—having sundry natural weaknesses, such as old association and youthful habit, and a regard to the feelings of others, not to speak of the affectionate prejudices of a good Churchman—was quite free to do his daily service at chapel, and say his prayers, even at the very moment when the intellectual being was busy with the most delicate demonstration that prayer in a universe governed by absolute law was an evident absurdity and contradiction of all reason. Colin for his part looked on at this partition, and smiled in his turn. He was not shocked, as perhaps he ought to have been; but then, as has been said, he too was a man of his age, and found many things which were required by absolute orthodoxy unnecessary *impedimenta*, as Lauderdale had called them. But, with all this, the young man had never been able to cut himself in half, and he would not learn to regard the process as one either advantageous or honourable. Such, apart from the work which was necessary in obedience to his grand original impulse, were the studies he pursued in Oxford. At the same time he had another occupation in hand, strangely out of accord at once with those studies and with his own thoughts. This was the publication of poor Meredith's book, the "Voice from the Grave," at which he had laboured to the latest moment of his life. In it was represented another world, an altogether contradictory type of existence. Between Colin's intellectual friends, to whom the "Hereafter" was a curious and interesting but altogether baffling subject of investigation, and the dying youth who had gone out of this world in a dauntless primitive confidence of finding himself at once in the shining streets and

endless sunshine of the New Jerusalem, the difference was so great as to be past counting. As for the young editor, his view of life was as different from Meredith's as it was from that of his present companions. The great light of heaven was to Colin, as to many others, as impenetrable as the profoundest darkness; he could neither see into it, nor permit himself to make guesses of what was going on beyond; and, consequently, he had little sympathy with the kind of piety which regards life as a preparation for death. Sometimes he smiled, sometimes he sighed over the proofs as he corrected them; sometimes, but for knowing as he did the utter truthfulness with which the dead writer had set forth his one-sided and narrow conception of the world, Colin would have been disposed to toss into the fire those strange warnings and exhortations. But when he thought of the young author, dead in his youth, and of all the doings and sayings of those months in which they lived together, and, more touching still, of those conversations that were held on the very brink of the grave, and at the gate of heaven, his heart smote him. And then his new friends broke in upon him, and discussed the proofs with opinions so various that Colin could but admire and wonder. One considered them a curious study of the internal consciousness, quite worthy the attention of a student of mental phenomena. Another was of opinion that such stuff was the kind of nutriment fit for the uneducated classes, who had strong religious prejudices, and no brains to speak of. When Colin found his own sentiments thrown back to him in this careless fashion, he began to see for the first time the conceit and self-importance of his judgment. For Meredith had faced death with that faith of his, and was at least as well able to judge as his present critic. The result was that the young man, thus seeing his own defects reflected out of the eyes of others, learned humbleness, and went on with his work of editing, without judging. Other lessons of a similar kind came to him in the same way un-

aware; and thus he went on, thinking still of that parish church in Scotland, in which all these gifts of his would be utterly lost and buried according to the judgment of the world.

"If you have set your heart on being a parson," some one said to him—and he could not help recalling the time when Sir Thomas Frankland had said exactly the same—"go into the Church, at least. Hang it! Campbell, don't go and bind yourself to a conventicle," said his anxious acquaintance; "a man has always a chance of doing something in the Church."

"That is precisely my idea," said Colin, "though you fellows seem to think it the last possibility. And, besides, it is the only thing I can do, with my ideas. I can't be a statesman, as you have a chance of being, and I have not an estate to manage. What else would you have me do?"

"My dear fellow," said another of his friends, "you are as sure of a Fellowship as any man ever was. Go in for literature, and send your old Kirk to Jericho—a fellow like you has nothing to do in such a place. One knows the sort of thing precisely; any blockhead that can thump his pulpit, and drone out long prayers—"

"That is our weak point," said Colin, who felt much more disposed to be angry than became his philosophy, "but nobody can make public prayers now-a-days; it's a forgotten faculty. Many thanks for your advice, but I prefer my own profession. It should be good for something, if any profession ever was."

"Well, now, taking it at the very best, how much do you think you are likely to have a-year?—a hundred and fifty, perhaps? No, I don't mean to say that's final;—but, of course, a thoughtful fellow like you takes it into consideration," said Colin's adviser; "everything is badly paid now-a-days—but, at all events, there are chances. If a man is made of iron and brass, and has the resolution of an elephant, he may get to be something at the Bar, you know, and make a mint of

money. And, even in the Church, to be sure, if he's harmless and civil, something worth having may come in his way; but you are neither civil nor harmless, Campbell. And, by Jove! it's not the Church you're thinking of, but the Kirk, which is totally different. I've been in Scotland," continued the Mentor, with animation; "it's not even one Kirk, which would be something. But there's one at the top of the hill and one at the bottom, and I defy any man to tell which is which. Come, Campbell, don't be a Quixote—give it up!"

"You might as well have told my namesake to give up the Queen's service after he had lost a battle," said Colin. "I don't suppose Sir Colin ever did lose a battle, by the way. I am not the sort of stuff for a Fellow of Balliol," said the young man; "I'd like to work among men—that is my idea of being a priest, or clergyman, or minister, or whatever you choose to call it. Next to that I should like to command a regiment, I believe—that's my ambition; and I don't mean, you may be sure, to desert my standard, and take to writing books, even if I could do it. Yes, you are perfectly right," said Colin, turning round upon one of his visitors, who was silent—"it is almost the only kind of kingship possible to a son of the soil."

"I never said so," said the young man he addressed, in a patronizing tone; "I thought, indeed, you expressed yourself very well, Campbell. It is a curious study altogether. Scotland, though it is what one may call a nation of dissenters, is always an interesting country. If you happened to be of the seed of the martyrs, you might lead her back to a better faith."

At which Colin laughed, and forgot his momentary irritation. "None of you know anything about it; let us postpone our conclusion in the meantime for ten years," said the cheerful young autocrat. Ten years was like to be an

eventful period to all that little assembly who were standing on the verge of life; but they all made very light of it, as was natural. As for Colin, he did not attempt to make out to himself any clear plan of what he intended to do and to be in ten years. Certainly, he calculated upon having by that time reached the highest culmination of which life was capable. That he meant to be a prince in his own country was a careless expression, unintentionally arrogant, and said out of the fulness of his heart, as so many things are for which an account has to be given in latter years; for, in reality, the highest projects that could move the spirit of a man were in Colin's mind. He had no thought of becoming a popular preacher, or the oracle of a coterie; and the idea of personal advancement never came into his head, rash though his words were. What he truly intended was not quite known to himself, in the vague but magnificent stirrings of his ambition. He meant to take possession of some certain corner of his native country, and make of it an ideal Scotland, manful in works and stedfast in belief; and he meant from that corner to influence and move all the land in some mystical method known only to the imagination. Such are the splendid colours in which fancy, when sufficiently lively, can dress up even such a sober reality as the life of a Scotch minister. While he planned this, he seemed to himself so entirely a man of experience, ready to smile at the notions of undisciplined youth, that he succeeded in altogether checking and deceiving his own inevitable good sense—that watchful monitor which warns an imaginative mind of its extravagance. This was the great dream which, interrupted now and then by lighter fancies, had accompanied Colin more or less clearly through all his life. And now the hour of trial was about to come, and the young man's ambition was ready to accomplish itself as best it might.

To be continued.

THE MAIDEN FROM AFAR

SCHILLER.

(Translated by Dr. Anster.)

WITH peasants poor in lowly glade
 When the first larks were warbling there,
 Came, with each coming year, a maid,
 Vision divinely fair!

Of that rough vale she was no child,
 She came none knew from what far place;
 She vanished, and the sylvan wild
 Retained of her no trace.

The bosoms of the savage race
 Expand; they see her and revere,
 For round her dwells a lofty grace
 That tempers Love with Fear.

And flowers she brought from her far land
 Of happier suns, and fruits mature,
 From trees by softer breezes fanned
 Beneath a sky more pure.

She gives, and all receive with joy,
 To some rich fruits, gay flowers to some;
 The grey-haired on his staff—the boy
 Alike wend happy home.

Welcome were all that came, but when
 She saw two lovers fond and true,
 Then gave she her best gifts; oh! then,
 Her flowers of heavenliest hue!

FIRES.

BY A CANTAB.

WE were at wine in W.'s rooms when some one came in to tell us that there was a fire at Cottenham. "Where's Cottenham, and how far is it?" was the common shout. A vague sort of answer of "About eight miles, and beyond Milton somewhere," was quite enough for half-a-dozen strong-legged and strong-winded young men, of twenty-one or thereabouts; and, without a minute's delay, off they

set for the field of action. When Magdalene had been passed, and the open road reached, there, straight before us, was the smoking, glaring evidence that the report we had heard was only too true, and that another of those incendiary fires had been enkindled, which, at that time, were the disgrace of the East-Anglian Counties. Our walk soon quickened into a trot, and somewhat

under ninety minutes saw us in the large, straggling village of Cottenham. We soon perceived that, right in the wind, some malicious fellow had set fire to the stacks in a large farmyard, which, by that time, were all consumed, and the fire was busy devouring the buildings and dwelling-house. In front of the house was a wide open street, across which the flakes of fire were blown by the freshening wind. Men were on the thatched roof of a cottage on the other side of the street, trying, with pails of water, to keep down the fire, which already threatened to spread across the village, the greater part of which lay in that direction. But their efforts were all in vain. The whole house was soon in flames, which soon spread along the low thatched cottages on that side of the street. There were no engines (but the parish engine, not much larger than a garden-pump, and that out of order); there was no one to order and control the gazing multitudes, who were, many of them, willing to work; so, at last, we University-men took the matter into our own hands. Farther down the street, we found that the windward of a row of three thatched cottages was on fire, and that there was no hope of saving them. Beyond them was a gap of a yard or two. We got all the furniture and goods out of the houses, depositing them safely under the hedge on the other side of the road. I carried a cradle, baby and all, out of one house. I saw some other man helping a poor imbecile woman downstairs, her daughter enticing her out by saying to her, "Come and see Mary, mother. You shall see Mary if you'll come." The words seemed to touch some chord of sorrow or hope in the poor woman's heart, and she was taken out of the house. We then fastened a rope to the beam which ran along the front of the house, supporting the bottom of the rafters, and, with a long pull and a strong pull, brought the whole roof down. We then poured water over the ruins, and over the next house, and thus cut off the fire in that direction. But it had meantime been spreading farther across the village, devouring, if my

memory fails not, forty-eight houses, of which eighteen were farmhouses, with barns, stables, and stacks. When we had done our work in this first street at which we had arrived, we followed the track of flame into another street, where the same work of destruction was proceeding. Our way lay through gardens and orchards, where we found poor people sitting with their household goods around them, looking most sad and pitiable. Later in the night, the church was opened for the reception of the homeless. About two o'clock, the engines from Cambridge got to work, and then we, with many other gownsmen, took our turn at the, by no means easy, work of pumping. We had been at Cottenham by half-past eight; the engines were at least five hours later—the rule then being that the engines did not stir till some one had arrived who guaranteed the necessary payments. Under the influence of the well-appointed engines, and the willing arms of the gownsmen, the flames were soon overpowered, and no fresh buildings ignited. One engine at eight o'clock would have saved the village. About four o'clock we began to think of returning; and, in a stronger force than we started, we began to wend our weary way home. We had not gone far before a dog-cart overtook us, into which I managed to scramble—a shout of "get some supper ready" saluting my ears as I drove off. It was just the end of the Easter Vacation; there were very few men in College. I knocked up all I knew to beg for food for a dozen hungry men, whom I expected in my rooms in a short time. But never a bit of anything could I get but eggs. So the only thing was to light the fire, boil the kettle, brew tea, and cook the eggs. Men I knew and men I did not know soon poured into my rooms, and, though wishing for something rather more substantial, we were very thankful for the eggs. About six we got to bed. In the course of the day we drove over and visited the still smouldering ruins, the strangest sight being six new white brick houses, standing still erect, but gutted of all

their woodwork. They had only just been rebuilt after a fire which had destroyed several houses a few months before. Thus ended the great Cottenham Fire.

Perhaps the most startling fire that took place in Cambridge in my time, was that at St. Michael's Church, then held by good old Professor Scholefield. It was one Sunday-morning. The Sunday-school had been held in the church, and, just as the congregation was coming in, about a quarter to eleven, flames were seen breaking out in the roof. The iron pipe of a common stove had got red-hot and had ignited the beams in the roof, through which it passed. It was full term time, and therefore there was soon a full muster of gownsmen. There were no waterworks then in Cambridge, so that the whole supply of water had to be brought up from the Cam. This could only be reached by the long, narrow Trinity Lane; but soon a double line of men was formed down the lane, across Trinity New Court—the grass, generally preserved from the profane feet of undergraduates with religious care, being mercilessly trampled down—into Trinity grounds, and so to the river, where Long Johnson (afterwards stroke of the University boat in which I rowed), with other plucky men, was seen standing up to his middle in the water steadily filling the empty buckets. Dons even took their places in the ranks; and others, careful of the health of those committed to their care, were seen pouring out glasses of brandy for the men who were working in the water. After I had done my share of the handing work for a time, one of the most intelligent and respectable of our college servants got half-a-dozen of us together, and took us to get our College engine. Knowing the town well, he took us round by Sidney-street and the Market-place into the yard belonging to Messrs. Swan and Hurrell, ironmongers. There was a good supply of water; and, taking the hose through the houses of Rose-crescent, he got to the back of the church, and just reached the chancel window as the flames had seized the beautiful old oak stalls, which adorned

that part of the church. These we saved. The rest of the church was thoroughly destroyed, and had to be re-built. Some of the men on this occasion exposed themselves to great risk; all worked with a will, but yet system was wanting.

The only other fire at which I "assisted" at Cambridge was at a house in Sidney-street—close to Trinity Church. The men worked here as willingly and hard as ever, even though the house had been occupied by one of those sharks who sometimes prey upon the young and thoughtless. Old Whitaker had been one of those wretches who entice young men into extravagance and worse, by lending money, or buying clothes or other articles of property from men who are hard up. I had known a silly fellow who had been in the habit of getting clothes on credit from his tailor, and then selling them to old Whitaker, of course for half-price or less. It was, therefore, with some satisfaction that, at the next summer assizes, I saw the old wretch sentenced to transportation for life for setting fire to his house—the fact being that his malpractices had compelled the University authorities to "discommune" him, *i.e.* forbid the undergraduates to have any dealings with him. His trade thus being gone, he had hoped to make the Insurance Offices pay him for stock which he had previously removed.

A few weeks after I had taken my degree, I was in Cambridge for a couple of days, and to my sorrow the front of Trinity Hall was burnt down without my knowing it. I was sorry for the college. I am afraid that I grieved almost as much that I was not there to see—the fact being that Cambridge men felt a kind of savage interest in extinguishing fires. I have often said that it was part of my University training. A few months after I had gone to my first curacy, I had the opportunity of showing what my education in this line had done for me. One Sunday morning, at five o'clock, I was awakened by a loud crackling noise, which I found to proceed from the wooden buildings of a tan-yard, which were in a perfect blaze. A very few minutes

sufficed to take me to the spot, and I gained a considerable amount of *kudos* by my exertions on that occasion.

I daresay the present generation of Cantabs is just as fond of fires, and just as willing to work at putting them out, as we were. The young and kindly hearts must be just the same in their feelings now as then. What I should like to hear of is the establishment of a Volunteer Fire Brigade in my old University. I venture to say that, if the colonel of the University Volunteers were to graft the fire brigade on to his system, it would add wonderfully to its popularity. In the rifle corps there is the necessary discipline, authority, and organization. After half-a-dozen drills with the engines there would only be needed a monthly practice to keep the brigade efficient. The college servants should also be enrolled in the brigade, so that there would still be a body of men ready for any emergency in the vacations. If some such plan were adopted, much desultory energy and un-

directed power would be brought under control. Clergymen and country gentlemen would acquire a kind of knowledge which might often be very useful in remote districts; and the University which began the Volunteer movement might give an impulse to Volunteer Fire Brigades which would produce beneficial effects from Cumberland to Cornwall.

Some anxious parents might say that they did not send their sons to the University to make firemen of them, and to expose them to the great risks that attend such an employment. But the fact is, that men will go to fires, and will work at them. It must certainly be better to have them there under discipline than as their own masters. The risk would be much less; the good done much greater. And, as the University engines would always move at the first alarm of fire, much valuable property might be saved while the managers of other engines were bargaining as to who was to pay for the engines, as happened at Cottenham, and lately near Preston.

"LIKE HER—BUT NOT THE SAME!"

I SEEK her by the stream that laves
Yon crumbling convent wall,
And in the silent place of graves
That loved her soft footfall;
Then in a dream thro' evening calm
Again we wander by the palm.

But lo! this glooming crust unstirred
Gives o'er the sombre glow
Of caverned fire—my dream is blurred:
I wake—the fire is low:
Alone I hear the wind and rain
To-night chill beat my window-pane.

"Yet she is nigh—behold," they say,
"Yon queenly-smiling dame!"
More cold this cold heart turns away—
Like her—but not the same!
I knew I left *her* lying where
Yon graves in sunlight sleep so fair.

RODEN NOEL.

A BASQUE PASTORALE.

THIS Pastorale was played at Larran, June 20th, 1864.

The benevolent reader will perhaps at once exclaim, with varied energy of expression, according to his or her peculiar temperament: "Where is Larran? and what is a Pastorale?"

Larran is a village of about 1,200 souls, high among the mountains of the French-Spanish frontier, near the head waters of Le Saison (or Cesson, according to Michel), in the *arrondissement* of Mauléon, in the department of the Basses Pyrénées, the south-westerly department of la belle France, and one of the most lovely in the whole of it. So far, geographically. Ethnologically—which is of still greater importance to the present subject—it is situated in the very heart of La Soule, in the Pays Basque, and thus occupies the proudest of all positions among that remarkable people; for, of the three *French* districts of the Pays Basque, viz. Le Labourd, La Basse Navarre, and La Soule, the inhabitants of the last are those who claim to be Basques *par excellence*—the pure, unmingled, aristocratic blood. And, what is still more to the present purpose, it is in the Souletin district alone, nay, only in its more remote parts, that Pastorales are now either acted at all, or in anything like their primitive simplicity.

Now, what is a Pastorale? Reader, the gist, the whole purport of this paper will be an attempt to describe to you a Pastorale. But, before describing the thing, we will endeavour to explain the word. It is evidently of French-Latin origin, and is defined in Boiste's Dictionary as "a theatrical or poetical piece, in which shepherds are the actors, musicians, dancers." This seems to be pretty nearly correct; but the Basques themselves use the French word "Tragédie" as synonymous with Pastorale. The piece we are about to describe is entitled in MSS. "*La Tragédie de*

Richard sans Peur, Duc de Normandie," and in ordinary conversation the terms Pastorale and Tragédie are indifferently used. The reader must not understand, however, by Tragédie, anything like the Tragedies of Corneille or of Shakespeare, nor even what is in some respects much nearer, the Plays of Euripides, or of Sophocles, or of the early Athenian stage. This will, we trust, be made plain by the sequel. Meanwhile we must be content with this definition: a Pastorale is a dramatic representation as performed among the Souletin Basques.

How can one get to Larran? Starting from Mauléon or from Tardets, the chief towns in the valley of Le Saison, and which are easily accessible from any of the central stations of the Pau and Bayonne railroad, there is a carriage-road up the valley as far as Licq; but thence the traveller must proceed on his own legs, or on those of horse, mule, or donkey. Following the path up the valley,—a valley as lovely in its quiet beauty as a mountain valley of the softer kind can well be—following up this valley, the path winds close along the banks of the Gave, or mountain stream, till the ascent begins which leads immediately to Larran itself. The village is perched on a kind of high plateau or promontory in the hills, so far above the little mountain stream which we have hitherto followed that it can neither be seen nor heard directly from it, though but a hundred yards from the centre of the village there is a point whence nearly the whole course of it may be seen, as it comes leaping, sparkling, foaming down from its iron mountain home. But, high as Larran is, it has still this peculiarity: from no quarter can it be seen as you approach it, until you are almost in its streets; and again, when you are in it, nought can be seen from it but the open sky, and the summits of the neighbouring but still somewhat distant mountains. It was in the rough open "place"

of this village, looked down upon by those majestic spectators, under a literally cloudless sky, and, of course, as its midsummer concomitant in Pyrenean latitudes, a blazing scorching southern sun, that this Pastorale was played—acted for eight long hours, or, reckoning the preliminary procession, for nearly nine.

The performers of these Pastorales are no paid actors—they are no set of artists devoting themselves, either exclusively or in part, to the service of the tragic muse. They are simply the rustic villagers, young or old as the case may be, who, for their own pleasure, or to while away the tedium of a long winter in the mountains, and for the entertainment of their neighbours, or for the still more cherished approval of the fair Basque maidens, learn and act these Pastorales. In the district of La Soule there are generally one or two acted yearly, but seldom at the same village in two consecutive years. In the acting the sexes are rarely, if ever, mingled. Generally all the performers are males, young lads or boys taking the female parts; but, sometimes, once in seven years or so, the maidens of the valley will act a piece, the subject of which is almost always taken from the life of some female saint; and excellently well we are assured they do it—the girls in this case taking the male as well as the female parts. At Larran, the piece we witnessed was performed by the young bachelor lads of the village and of the neighbourhood. None of the actors were above twenty-seven or twenty-eight years of age, but they ranged from boyhood up to that age. The piece selected was entitled (as above) “Richard sans Peur, Duc de Normandie;” but, notwithstanding this French title, the reader must please to remember that every other word of it was Basque (*Escaras*), excepting solely in the interlude, wherein some words of Béarnois *patois* were introduced.

Let us now attempt a description of the accessories. First, of the stage. No stage that ever was constructed could possibly be more simple. It consisted merely

of rough boards, laid on joists, which again rested on empty wine-barrels set on end. The whole surface of the stage might be some sixty feet by forty. The access to it was by a short ladder of four or five steps from the ground in front. The hinder part abutted on a house, on a level with the first floor, taking advantage of a slope in the ground, so that through the windows and doors of this house, the actors and inmates found egress and ingress to and from the stage. Some five or six feet from the house-wall, a sheet, to which a few flowers and ribbons were attached, was suspended across the stage, and the space thus inclosed between the sheet and the house formed the ordinary green-room, or retiring-place for the actors when off duty. At the sides, this too was as open as any other part of the stage, and as patent to the curiosity of the spectators. At the upper right-hand corner of the sheet was affixed (as is always the case in these Pastorales) a wooden puppet, whose body, legs, and arms could be jerked about by cords; which puppet is supposed, in the Basque idea of Saracenic and diabolic mythology, to represent Mahomet, the god, or idol, whom Saracens and devils equally adore. It is frequently alluded to as such in the course of the performance. This is absolutely the whole scenic decoration; the rest is bare boards.

How shall we describe the actors themselves, and their dresses? How can we speak of simplicity without making it ridiculous? how show originality lurking beneath conventionality, and old ideas of romance united so quaintly with the latest phases of modern caprice in feminine and military toilettes? Can the reader picture to himself Charlemagne, that doughty emperor, in the blue uniform of a national guard, with white cotton gloves for gauntlets, and a gold-headed Malacca walking-cane to represent the sceptre before which trembled almost all of Europe's monarchs; and Richard, Duke of Normandy, the hero of the piece, in similar attire, but with blue glass spectacles on, in order to hide a squint?

Clarissa, too—the fair Clarissa, the only daughter of England's proud king, Astolpho—in hat and feather, ay, white cotton gloves, and crinoline? These are types of most of the dresses on that day. But by the side of these was the graceful Satans' dress—those darling Satans of whom we shall have so much to say—so thoroughly Basque, from the pretty red beret (cap), with its white tassels, to the hempen sandals (spartingues or espadrilles); the short, tight-fitting jacket of brightest scarlet, open in front, the crimson sash, the nether garments white, with just three threads of different colours, some inches apart, below the knee. An Archbishop, too, was there, gorgeous in purple spangled cassock and cape, and purple paste-board mitre, with silver tinsel cross upon it, and gilded crosier. An Angel, too—a boy in satin tunic, white, with garland on his head of green and white, with sash of blue—a wingless angel, but who ever kept a tiny cross upheld between his joined palms and out-stretched finger-tips, and ever marched with softly measured steps, and ever spoke in softly chanted tones. Such were the chief costumes. Blue was the colour of the good and the heroic—of Roland, and of Charlemagne, of Richard himself, and of Salomon, king of Brittany, and all the French; while scarlet, horrid scarlet flamed upon the backs of all the bad—the terrible Satans, the heathen Saracens, the perfidious English.

The head-dresses, among all else that was conventional, were truly original, and seemed invented for the occasion. If Charlemagne, for instance, was not Charlemagne in the play, but some one else (reader, express not too strongly thy astonishment; such changes happened continually, for there was a play within the play, in which the metamorphose of the characters was indicated to the eye by change of head-dress only)—if Charlemagne, I say, was not himself, but some one else, he wore a common buff wide-awake; but, when himself, he shone most glorious to behold in tinsel bravery—upon his head he wore what one of my companions most accurately

described as “a structure like a conical bird-cage made of sticks of barley-sugar, with his head in the middle of it.” The head-dresses of the blue division were but variations on this, with field-marshals' and gendarmes' hats for the minor characters; but there, the Sultan and his men, were terrible in gleaming helmets of carmine tinsel, over which nodded fearfully four plumes of mingled red and white. A small oval looking-glass did duty for a diamond above the front of the mighty Saladin, and by this small mirror his gallant followers did literally often dress themselves. A giant, too, appeared in black, with sombre plumes at least half a yard high upon his lofty head. Let this suffice for the millinery department.

The other properties comprised a full orchestra of *three* performers, and *five* instruments. The first performer played a violin simply, like any other village musician; but his fellow-artists played four instruments, two apiece at the same time, viz. a pipe or fife, and a Basque tambourin. The former was played with the mouth and right hand; the latter rested on the shoulder and knees, and was beaten by a stick with the left hand. This Basque tambourin must by no means be confounded with the instrument of similar name familiar to our childhood in the hands of German peasant girls. It is quite a different instrument—being one of the many variations of the guitar, only made of stouter wood, oblong in shape, about two and a half feet long, but slightly broader at the upper end than at the lower, and with a low bridge, over which are stretched five strings of very coarse material, which are beaten with a short stick, about twelve inches long. The music thus produced seems to be not at all unpleasant to dance to, or to give the rhythm to the chants. For other purposes we dare not hazard an opinion.

Stage construction, scenery (or rather no scenery), costumes, orchestra, have been more or less described. What remains? Some very useful personages. First, a prompter and stage-conductor

rolled into one, and who without false shame pursued his useful labours before the eyes and ears of all the spectators. Secondly, six stage-keepers, one at each corner, and two at the sides of the stage, dressed in white berets, in neat blue and white blouses with turndown collars, belted round the waist, and with white inexpressibles. They were armed with guns and bayonets, which guns they fired (as by proxy) whenever a hero fell, and very often promiscuously besides. And, when the report was heard, the Basque matrons and maidens all called out in charming nervousness (like the unfortunate maidens of a Greek Tragedy) Ay! yai! ai! yai! ai! yai yai yai eh!!!! to the great satisfaction of those stalwart warriors, who themselves seldom fired their old flint pieces without firmly shutting both eyes, and turning their heads as far as possible away from the trigger and the stock. The further business of these stage-keepers was to preserve order among those of the spectators (a pretty numerous company), who were admitted to seats *on* the stage, and to prod small boys in the back with their bayonets, in order to repulse their attempts to escalate the same, or to hunt them out from among the wine-barrels below, when their game of hide-and-seek grew too uproarious there. They were also useful in crying out "Shoal!" *i.e.* silence, when conversation grew too animated among the inattentive portion of the audience.

The reader must now be asked to imagine himself, at nine o'clock on the morning of June 20th, sitting at the open window of a spacious bed-room in the village inn, looking down on the place, and with a side-view of the stage below, commanding a prospect of the doings of the green-room as well as of the performance upon the stage itself. At present the stage is untenanted, save by a few women who are leisurely stitching flowers and ribbons to the sheets they have just put up to form the back of the stage; but nearly all the previous night, beneath the clear, bright moon, private, but by no means quiet, rehearsals of the parts have been going on, mostly

of the steps and dances, not of the speeches. Throughout the whole village, however, some unusual silent stir is visible. The sounds of fife and violin are faintly and irregularly heard; horses are led up the steep hill sides, and small ravines, and through the stony lanes which lead to and through the village; while indoors a universal "toilette" seems going on. In the inn itself each room contains some monarch or hero of the day putting on his bright attire. In the kitchen, Safomon, king of Brittany, turns up the tails of his uniform to a blazing fire, as if it were midwinter instead of midsummer. Strange, half-dressed figures flit from door to door, or appear at open windows in a still odder stage of habiliment. But, at length, all, both men and steeds, are visibly converging to the more distant part of the village. The music settles to a more regular strain, and through openings among the houses glimpses are to be caught of the procession as it winds its way round the village to pay due respect to the authorities—the mayor, the parish priest, the chief custom-house officers, &c. — before commencing the business of the day. First marches on foot the orchestra—the aforesaid trio of violin and tambourin players—heading the procession; then follow on horseback seven or eight of the blue or heroic division; then on one mule come the Archbishop, and the Angel-boy clinging most tightly round his grace's waist. A lady (boy, of course) follows next on horseback, in hat and feathers, and in crinoline. Then proudly march on restless steeds the haughty Saracens; and the three Satans close the procession—one in solitary grandeur upon his horse, but his two companions carried back to back upon a single noble steed. At intervals along the line walk the stage-keepers with loaded muskets and fixed bayonets, and every now and then some straggling shots indicate to our ears at what point of the village they have arrived. At length the whole procession is seen winding down before the church, and across the "place" to the front of the stage.

And now the actors separate into two

portions. The red division disappears for a time behind the houses at the farther end of the "place." The orchestra and stage-keepers mount the stage as easily and as naturally as any one else; but the others—what are they doing? They seem as if they wanted to make their steeds perform a dervish dance, or to try if a horse can be made giddy by imitating a teetotum. After tremendous caroling among the crowd immediately in front, some one dismounts and rushes at the ladder. There seems nothing to prevent him mounting easily, but it appears to be absolutely necessary for the actors on these occasions to suppose some invisible force repelling all the assailants' efforts to mount. Once, twice, thrice, (and oftener by the principal characters), is the attempt made in vain, ere the final rush and bound surmounts all imaginary obstacles, and lands the hero in the middle of the stage. The Archbishop, the Angel, and the Lady alone advance more quietly. At last, the first division of actors is on the stage, and some have retired behind the sheets. The orchestra now plays a kind of chant, and the future Charlemagne comes forward to the steps, and, standing in the middle of the stage, uncovers to his audience, and then with a clear, ringing voice slowly chants forth a couplet of the long prologue, which details the whole history of the play. Some measured steps bring him to the right-hand corner, where he chants another couplet; thence to the middle; thence to the left-hand corner; and so on continually till the prologue is completed, and the play is ready to commence. But, before that, see, all the actors on the stage advance to the front, and kneel down, while the Archbishop intones a prayer, in which the others join, invoking God's blessing on the work. This pious act, which was repeated at the close of the performance, seemed to be done in all seriousness; at least, it was done with all due decorum. So also, when the "Angelus" sounded from the church tower, on the moment the music ceased, the actors stopped their acting, actors and audience all took off their hats, and crossed themselves, and

remained some minutes in silent prayer. This was repeated twice, we believe—at twelve and at six o'clock.

But now the piece begins. How shall we describe it? To go through it all would be impossible: and how give an idea in brief of a performance which occupied eight long hours, without a pause; which included at once nearly all possible dramatic elements; which seemed as if it were meant to embrace all the innumerable vicissitudes of human life, and all possible relations of man, both with the finite and the infinite; which was by turns tragic and comic, and always operatic—was mythic, and mystic, and historic, epical, lyrical, and didactical, musical and Terpsichorical; in which the actors' parlance ranged from ordinary dialogue, through monotone and chant, to most elaborate chorale and solo, and their gestures from mere stately walking, and more measured marching, through the gliding angel step and the Saracenic wild stamp, to a sort of (forgive the French expression) "*pas de bataille*," and the Satans' graceful dance? For all was done more or less to time and tune. Each set of characters, and each of the chief characters, had a certain peculiar measure; and, as the characters of the Pastorale outnumbered the actors, the same persons had several different parts to perform, and the necessary change of *personnage* was made known often by merely changing the tune, and sometimes in addition by a slight change of head-dress. These metamorphoses made the plot most difficult to follow, especially by those who had not a quick ear to catch the distinction between strange tunes. For the first half-hour or so of the performance it was exceedingly amusing to watch the gravity with which some damsel or other would step out from the crowd, cross the stage, approach one of the actors, and set right any ribbon, &c. that had got awry during the procession and the subsequent violent equestrian exertions—the person operated upon standing the while as calm and impassive as a tailor's block, and not one syllable spoken or even whispered by either party.

Let us now attempt some description of the piece itself. The *dramatis personæ* were as follows :—

BLUE DIVISION.

RICHARD SANS PEUR, *Duc de Normandie*.
 MARCHÉ, *Richard's faithful friend*.
 CHARLEMAGNE.
 ROLAND, *with his horn*.
 OLIVER.
 SALOMON, *King of Brittany*.
 OGIER, *King of Denmark*.
 COMTE DE GALOS.
 THIERRY.
 DUC DE BOURBON.
 ALENÇON.
 AMIRAL.
 THE ARCHBISHOP.
 " ANGEL.
 " CLERK.
 " HERMIT LABATE (L'Abbé?).
 AMBASSADORS.
 SERVANTS, &c.
 SAILORS.

Ladies.

CLARISSA, *King of England's daughter*.
 NURSE, *same as SEBASTINA in the Interlude*.
 BRINDAMOUR, *as Richard's Bride*.

RED DIVISION.

THE SULTAN.
 " MAHOMÉ.
 " NARTABARROS.
 " SARRASIN. { SARACENS.
 " DANOIS. { DANES.
 " AUSTRACHÉ. } whether { AUSTRIANS.
 SOLDIERS.
 AMBASSADORS.
 A TERRIBLE GIANT IN BLACK.

Dancing { SATAN.
 Satanic { BELGIFER.
 Chorus. { BRINDAMOUR (afterwards metamorphosed into a lady, and back again to his original shape).

For the Interlude (in Macaronic verse in Basque and Béarnois Patois).

PETIT JEAN.
 RICOLIN.
 SEBASTINA.

The piece might almost have been entitled, "The Temptations of Richard, Duke of Normandy." For throughout he is being continually assailed, either directly or indirectly, by those Terpsichorean Satans, who seem to be at the bottom of all mischief concocted either on the earth or under the earth; and most terribly they plagued him. He enters

upon the stage longing for some one to do battle with, and they immediately appear with their peculiar but most graceful dance, and the struggle commences which ends only with the piece. They not only do open battle with him in their own persons, and seek to entrap him into a false judgment on a most knotty point of spiritual judicature as to the proper possessor of a deceased hermit's soul; they not only rouse up Saracens, English, and a most dreadful giant, against him, and quarrels among his own people, the wrath of Charlemagne, and the terrible might of Roland; these were comparatively easily withstood; but Brindamour most cunningly transformed himself into a frightfully (Basque epithet) beautiful female infant, whom Richard finds in the woods, and puts out to nurse. Richard then starts off to Turkey in search of adventures. In his absence is introduced a broad and not very refined farce, by way of interlude, in mingled Basque and Béarnois *patois*, which is utterly untranslatable; so exceedingly free-spoken¹ is the genius of the Basque tongue. In Turkey Richard meets again with the ubiquitous Satans; and on his return, seven years after a victorious contest with them, he sends for the nurse and baby, and falls madly in love with the extraordinary and precocious beauty of the latter. In vain does Marché, most faithful of friends, and apparently chiefest of bores also, remonstrate. It is to no purpose; Richard will marry her. How the Satanically beautifully bride did torment her devoted husband, and the more she plagued him the more he loved her! Poor Marché, how he got abused and snubbed! At last, when the whole armoury of feminine wiles was exhausted

¹ "Another important observation to be made on the Basque language is, that, like all ancient languages, it expresses with decency, in plain terms, a number of things and ideas which modern delicacy obliges us to express by equivalents or periphrases in our tongues. Thus there exist many expressions in the Basque which will not shock the most chaste and delicate ears, but which, nevertheless, literally translated into French, would be insupportable."—*Michel, Le Pays Basque*, p. 58.

she—died. Richard weeps with inconsolable agony over his bride's corpse, till exhausted nature gives way, and he falls asleep, and only the ever-wakeful Marché is left to watch the dead and the living sleepers. Horror of horrors ! up starts the bride (who till then had excellently mimicked a female voice), and, speaking in Satanic tones, hints to poor Marché that now "*she* is going to have some fun ;" whereupon Marché, from fright, incontinently falls flat on his back, the noise of which fall wakes up Richard, who is wonderfully astonished to see his wife in such a condition. Now ensues a scene of exquisite blarney, in which again the devil-wife gets the victory ; and Richard, like a good, patient husband as he is, is sent off to some distant, sacred spring to fetch some holy water, which is to convert his Satanic into an angelic bride. Poor Marché is thus left alone with the fearsome lady, now a Satan undisguised, and who summons Satan himself and Bulgifer to her aid. In a trice is Marché slain, and shrouded up, and laid upon the stage where the false lady's false body had lain just before. The Satans dance and cut capers, and leap and bound around, across, and over him in most fantastic fashion, till Richard returns with his pot of holy water, when —*exeunt* Satans, and poor Richard finds that he has lost not only his devil-bride, but the most faithful and most tedious of friends as well. Weeping and wailing on Richard's part ; exuberant joy on the part of the Satans, who have again turned up. Enter, at this point, Archbishop, Angel, Clerk, &c. who soon put to flight the Satans, but sadly aggravate poor Richard's grief by reading him a most eloquent and proper sermon on the sins, pride and over-confidence, which have brought this infliction upon him. Then the play goes on. Enter Saracens, Danois, Austraché, and all the reds in most pleasant confusion. Then again the interlude is introduced ; thence we are introduced to the court of Charlemagne ; then follow fights with the Saracens, battles with the English, a long wooing of England's fair daughter,

Clarissa, and an eventual abduction of her from the guards ; a real marriage-feast of cake and wine upon the stage, in which the Satans, presumed invisible, and dancing all the while, steal their portions over the shoulders of the seated guests. Then follow a succession of single combats with all the knights of Charlemagne's court, over all of whom Richard is of course victorious ; and, lastly, with the mighty Emperor himself, whom it is not loyal to pommel, so that Richard goes on one knee, and begs pardon for allowing himself to be beaten. There is then a terrific contest with a giant, and a voyage to England, with a frightful shipwreck, in which Richard is the only person saved, and that on the back of Bulgifer. Then he descends to the other world, to do battle with his rescuer in his own realms, till at last, Richard being confirmed king of England, the story comes to an end, which is no end at all, and leaves one in a maze of doubt as to whether Richard has made friends with the Devil himself, or has thrashed him into submission, or is to be carried off by him as one sold to him for ever.

Such is a general outline of the plot, if plot it may be called, of the whole Pastoral. It may give a better idea of the drama in detail, if we cull one or two specimens from the earlier portion of it, and present the dialogue as best we can in translation.

The Pastoral opens with Richard advancing on horseback to the front of the stage, which is supposed to represent some castle, the unknown inmates of which he challenges to fight. After the challenge given, he dismounts, comes on the stage, and *exit*. Enter Satans dancing ; they consult how to oppose Richard ; Bulgifer shows the white feather, but Brindamour undertakes to deceive him. Enter Richard and his dog ; terrific combat, Satans' wands against Richard's sword and walking-stick, to the battle-tune—dog slain in the first round—second round Satans run away ; Bulgifer re-enters and suspends a child (afterwards Brindamour himself) on one of the trees of the forest.

Richard. It seemeth that I heard

A very feeble moaning ;
Doubtless in this wood
Something is taking place.

I will, therefore, enter
Into the forest ;
To see if I can discover
Who is thus complaining.

[*RICHARD goes to the wood, and returns with the child in his arms.*

Good people, I have found
The fairest child e'er seen ;
And the best thing I can do
Is to put it out to nurse.

I will at once be off
To seek a nurse,
To entrust to her
The rearing of this child. [*Walks up and down.*

Enter Nurse.

Rich. List here to me,
My worthy woman ;
To bring up this child
Perchance, would you be nurse ?

Nurse. Yes, my lord, certainly ;
I am now nursing ;
I will bring up the child,
If that be your good pleasure.

I will take the child
If you entrust it to me ;
And I will tend it
With all fidelity.

Rich. (giving the child.)

Take then the child
Tenderly in your arms,
And bestow, I pray you,
On it your tender care.

If the child's disposition
Should unhappily be bad,
To chastise it severely
I give you all authority.

Nurse. Well, beloved lord,
'Tis a fine infant,
And one would say,
'Twere scarce three days old.

Never have I seen
An infant like it ;
So very white a skin,
And withal so tender.

I will certainly do
All that is in my power ;
And when she is reared
I will restore her to you.

I will restore her to you
When she is weaned ;
And at the same time
You will pay me.

Richard then departs for Turkey. The
Pastorale, as we have said, follows him
thither so far as to give glimpses of his

adventures there with the Satans ; meanwhile, however, keeping note of the growth of the child whom he has left in the nurse's care, and who, being a devil in disguise, proves a sad torment to the worthy woman in the way of nursing, but, nevertheless, grows up astonishingly. Here also are introduced the interlude in Macaronic Basque and Béarnois *patois*, and a most curious scene, almost wholly unconnected with the main plot, in which the devils and a guardian angel contend for the soul of a hermit, and Richard is appointed arbiter. Of this episode—which was acted with all seriousness and apparent faith—the following is an account :—
Labaye, a hermit, appears on the stage. He is bound on a long journey to France, and is thinking of his many misdeeds, and forming good resolutions of penance and amendment. At last he kneels down and prays solemnly that he may be enabled to keep his resolutions. He has hardly risen and begun to walk about the stage when—*enter* Bulgifer.

Bulgifer. Whither away in this fashion ?
Tell me, great Abbot.
It seems to me wonderful
That you're abroad so early.

Labaye (continuing to walk). Let me go my own way.

If thou art an evil spirit,
In the name of Jesus, I command thee
Begone from here.

Bulg. I will let thee go,
Since thou speakest thus,
Though great will be my rage
If I've not thy soul.

[*LABAYE walks about ; BULGIFER places a chair on the stage and exits. LABAYE stumbles over the chair and falls dead.*

Enter Angel.

Ang. Art thou happy now,
My beloved Abbot ?
Thou may'st well say that in this world
Thou gav'st me grief enough.

I was selected by the Lord
To be thy guardian angel,
And 'twas my task to keep thee
From falling into mortal sin.

But thy passions
Surmounted all ;
Nay, even now thou wast
On the path of evil.

Bulg. Begone from here!

Take thyself off!

For at this time

I must have his soul.

He has greatly sinned

To the present moment;

He had only good intentions

When it was too late.

Ang. I cannot believe

That thou shalt have him;

But, on the contrary,

'Tis I that shall obtain him.

He performed on earth

Many devotions;

And, behold! he has died

With his book in his hand.

He prayed to the Virgin Mother

As he went on his way,

And he read his devotions

In the book thou seest.

He was at his devotions

When death came upon him;

And I am determined

To bear his soul to heaven.

Bulg. Once more I tell thee,

And I assure thee of it,

Surely it is not thou

Who will have his soul.

His habitual sin

Was of all the most heinous;

And even now he was

On his way to his love.

Ang. Whatever may have happened,

And whatever you may think,

Whatever belongs to him

Is henceforth my affair.

I see one thing clearly—

That we shall ne'er be able,

Thou and I, unaided,

To come to an understanding.

Wilt thou that we go

At once to Normandy?

There we'll have judged

The whole of our dispute.

There we shall find

A man of probity;

He will pronounce for us

A righteous judgment.

His name is Richard,

Duke of Normandy,

And of all knights

He is the foremost.

They put the soul in a box, and arrive in Normandy. Enter Richard and Marché, and take seats. Here are the pleadings of the Angel and Bulgifer on the case which they have agreed to refer to Richard, together with Richard's decision, and the result :—

Ang. Sure it is not long since

The abbot went out of his chamber;

He had a ladye love,

And he went to see her.

The abbot loved

That woman truly,

And to go see her

He left his chamber.

As he was on his way

He stumbled o'er a plank,

Which caused him to fall,

And unhappily he was killed.

But, before he fell,

He had the book in his hand,

And he read the Litanies

Of the Virgin Mother.

'Tis for you, sire,

To judge this soul,

And to tell us truly

Who has right thereto.

Though he went abroad

With that evil purpose,

Perhaps he'd have turned back

From that evil way.

The spirit of inspiration

Came upon him,

And he was returning

To better sentiments.

Though he had the intention,

He did not commit sin;

And death overtook him

Whilst praying to the Virgin Mother.

Sire, I beseech thee,

Give us thy judgment

If the soul of this abbot

Ought to be saved.

Bulg. Sire, turn, I beseech you,

Your attention to me,

For I will to you also

Explain my reasons.

Sire, that abbot went

In search of his ladye-love,

With the intention in his heart

To commit sin.

Such was his intention

When killed by the way;

And I think, sire,

That his soul is mine.

Pronounce a favourable sentence

On this occasion,

Or we shall have no more

Confidence in you.

Rich. This is not my business;

But, since you take me for judge,

You must both of you

Be guided by me.

If it must be, therefore,

I who judge this matter

I will make you both

Of one mind at once.

Replace that soul
Within its body,
And raise up the corpse
On the spot it fell.

And, if he go his way
Towards that woman's house,
The devil may carry him off
Whenever he please ;

But, if he return home,
Then let him live,
In order to see how
He'll conduct himself in the world.

If you duly submit
To what I tell you,
You will be, I am sure,
At once of the same mind.

Ang. We thank thee, Richard,
For thy good counsel ;
We shall soon be of one mind
Concerning this soul.

[*Exeunt RICHARD and MARCHÉ. The Angel replaces the soul in the body. The Abbot arises and turns to the Christians. Exit Angel.*]

Bulg. Accursed monk !
Thou, at least, art saved !
Ah, scoundrel Richard,
'Tis thy turn to be deceived. [*Exit.*]

The Satans do proceed to deceive Richard accordingly, and the means are ready. Is it not time that Richard should marry ? The ever-faithful Marché informs him that he is of that opinion, and that every one else is thinking so. Richard, in short, must have a duchess forthwith ! Richard replies that there is none in all the world that he will or can marry but that lovely child he found seven years before. Marché tells him that the young lady has already grown so wonderfully that, though it is but seven years since she was given to the nurse, she looks as if she were twenty years old. Nothing will content Richard on hearing this but that Marché go immediately and bring the nurse and the child. This is done, with the following consequences :—

Rich. Right welcome art thou,
My well-beloved nurse.
Is it possible that can be
The child I gave you ?

Nurse. Yes, sire, this is, indeed,
The child you gave me ;
She has grown a fair lady,
As you can plainly see.

A great miracle has been wrought
In this child, my lord.

For you see how she has grown
In such a short time.

'Tis now seven years, my lord,
Since you gave her to me,
And since then I have done
All that was in my power.

Sire, I shall be much pleased
If you are satisfied ;
And, if it be your good pleasure,
Give me now my wages.

Rich. I will pay you, nurse,
Truly and faithfully,
For I am well satisfied
With that young lady.

Withdraw now both of you ;
Enter in yonder ;
Come, come along,
Both of you together.

[*Exeunt Nurse and BRINDAMOUR.*]

Rich. Harken to me, Marché,—
Thou must set out at once
For the city of Rome,
And with all speed.

Thou wilt say to the Archbishop,
At once from me,
That he must marry me
To that young lady.

Mar. Sire, thou doest a wrong
To thy nobility,
In marrying somebody
Whose origin thou knowest not.

You may have in marriage
A great princess ;
Remove, then, from thy head
The idea of marrying that child.

Rich. Listen to me, Marché—
These are my reasons :
I have brought up this child
For seven long years.

I should be much grieved
To leave her now :
'Tis lost labour
To preach unto me.

Mar. I will then depart,
And bid him come ;
But you will repent
That you e'er wedded her.

Nevertheless, the marriage takes place in great state,—the Archbishop arriving with his Clerk, and proceeding thus with the ceremony :—

Archb. What ! you wish to marry
This child whom you found ?

Rich. My lord, I tell the truth ;
Certainly I will marry her.

[*RICHARD and BRINDAMOUR kneel.*]

Archb. Tell me, Richard,
Dost thou freely take

To be your wedded spouse.
The maiden here before us ?

Rich. From the bottom of my heart,
My lord, I take her
To be my wife.
Such is my entire wish.

Archb. And thou, young lady,
Tell me truly, now,
Wilt thou take to husband
Richard of Normandy ?

Brind. Yes, my lord,
I take him joyfully ;
Since I have been called, therefore,
He must truly have me.

Archb. Then, sir and madame,
I give you my blessing ;
And may God bestow on you
His holy grace.

The marriage ceremony having been so performed, and the Archbishop having given good advice to the married couple, and the Clerk having sung a hymn of gratulation, *exeunt omnes*. Alas ! in a trice what have we but Brindamour lying in a bed that has been prepared for her, and beginning to call out like one dying ? Richard and Marché enter, and approach the sick lady.

Brind. Oh ! sire, my dear friend,
I am wedded to you ;
'Tis why henceforth
I am called your wife.

My body is attacked
With a grievous ill ;
'Tis why I would ask
Of you a great favour.

Rich. Speak, madame ;
Ask what you will,
And I promise
To grant your request.

Brind. Sire, the favour I have
To ask from you
Is that, when I am dead,
You take my corpse to the hermitage.

Rich. Whatever you ask of me,
I will grant it to you ;
And I certainly
Will not quit you, madame.

[BRINDAMOUR dies.

Oh ! my well-beloved,
Dost thou give up the ghost ?
Farewell, farewell, for ever.
I, even I myself, will follow thee.

Alas ! my well-beloved spouse,
Do I now see thee dead ?
Yea, I see death itself
Coming even to me.

[RICHARD seats himself by the body.

Mar. Of what art thou thinking, sire ?
Be of good courage.
See, here is the Archbishop
Coming to console thee.

Enter Clerk and Archbishop.
Archb. Sire, my beloved friend,
Be comforted, I beseech thee.
We all must die ;
Be, therefore, of good courage.

The Clerk sings a hymn, offering the soul of the duchess to heaven ; and Richard and Marché are left together, Richard weeping. The funeral is to be on the morrow, and Marché lays the body in a coffin.

Rich. I tell thee, Marché,
My friendly knight,
I am dropping with slumber,
And am forced to succumb to it.

We are to watch the body,
Thou and I between us.
Whilst I am sleeping, therefore,
Do thou be watchful.

Mar. Yes, sire, be sure of it, I will be
As vigilant as may be ;
And, should I be alarmed,
I will awake thee.

[RICHARD drops to sleep. BRINDAMOUR lifts up the coffin-lid and speaks.

Brind. Awake ! awake ! bold sirs,
The moment is now arrived.

[MARCHÉ falls with fright. RICHARD awakes. MARCHÉ gets up. RICHARD draws his sword.

Rich. Oh ! Marché, tell me,
What art thou dreaming of ?
Who is there come
To do battle with thee ?

Brind. (speaking from the coffin.) Ah !

Richard, my good friend,
Duke of Normandy,
I wonder what thou hast done
With thy good courage.

Thou didst tell me,
'Tis now seven years ago,
That thou never feltest fear,
And nothing could alarm thee.

And I see now
That all that was false,
And at this very moment
Thou shakest with dread.

Rich. (sword in hand.) Thou liest most
audaciously,
Vile deceiver that thou art !
For I feel no fear—at all events
Up to this time.

Brind. Richard, I plainly see
That thou art afraid,
And that thou hast lost
All thy courage.

I plainly see

That thou dost tremble ;

Nay, I begin to think

Thou art a great coward,

If the body of a dead woman

Has thus alarmed thee ;

For thou didst lay hold upon

Thy sword in an instant.

Thou hast been selected

As the proudest of men ;

But of all others thou wilt be

This day the most confused.

Rich. Thou art greatly mistaken,

If this thou thinkest ;

For the present, at least,

I fear no man.

I have had fierce combats,

And no small troubles ;

But I have never been held back

By fear of any man.

Brind. Wherefore then didst thou

Draw thy sword

Out from its sheath,

And hast it still in hand ?

Rich. (sadly.) I now perceive

That thou art the devil.

To make me wretched

Wast thou sent here.

Since from out that coffin

Thou thus speakest,

I tell thee plainly,

Thou art a spirit of evil.

Brind. What thou sayest, Richard,

Is not the truth.

I would beg one thing of thee,

If thou wilt listen.

I am tormented

With a great trouble ;

For with great regret

Did I leave the world.

Rich. Tell me, madam,

I beseech thee,

What is that regret

You have at heart ?

Brind. Well, then, Richard,

My beloved husband,

I will make known to thee

My grievous torment.

For three long hours

I have been in a swoon,

And I am plagued

With a burning thirst.

To become a saint,

One thing is wanting to me,

That you should grant me,

Now, one desire.

My beloved husband,

In a desert

You must go,

To give me pleasure.

You will there find,

Beneath a tree,

A cool fountain.

Bring me to drink of that water.

Depart, then, my lord,

I pray you, instantly,

So that thenceforth

I may enjoy repose.

If thou wilt grant me

This favour, my lord,

I shall become a saint

From this time for evermore.

Certainly, my beloved spouse,

I tell thee the truth :

If thou giv'st me that pleasure,

I shall become a saint.

Rich. I will be off, then,

To go to that fountain ;

And do thou, Marché,

Keep good watch.

No sooner has Richard, simple fellow, gone for the holy water than Brindamour comes bodily out of the coffin and tells Marché she is going to kill him on the spot. Marché naturally objects—reasons with her, and, when that will not do, draws his sword. But, with the assistance of Bulgifer, who enters at the proper moment and fights Marché to appropriate music, Marché is killed in spite of himself. He is then put into the coffin, and the Satans *exeunt*. Richard, coming back with his pot of holy water, sees no one. He looks round on all sides, and at last into the coffin. On beholding his faithful Marché there, he throws down the pot of holy water, and bursts into lamentations, and, after kneeling and praying, *exit* sobbing. It is time now for the Clerk and the Archbishop to return, as they had promised, for the interment of the duchess. They do so.

Archb. See, we here return

Unto this hermitage,

That we may pray

For the soul of the duchess.

Enter RICHARD.

Rich. I beseech you, gentlemen,

Sing no more,

Nor any longer pray

For my departed wife.

This day, sir, have come forth

All the devils of hell ;

They have come to this place

For to torment me.

Give heed, my lord,
Unto my sad position—
How I have been wedded
Unto a she-devil.

In malice she sent me
To a certain fountain,
And meantime she killed
My faithful knight.

And I am thus
In sore affliction.
And truly I know not
What will become of me.

[All walk up and down.

Archb. Come then, sire, console thyself,
And be virtuous ;
All that thou now sayest
Are not the words of a brave man.

God has permitted
All these things ;
He has permitted the devil
To come and tempt you,

To the end that He may know
Who are the virtuous,
And discover who deserveth
His holy grace.

Those evil spirits
Are all our tempters ;
And they tempt
Those who are afflicted.

Rich. But I am truly grieved
To have slept these seven years ;
And, if I change not my humour,
I shall never wed anybody.

Archb. Richard, my friend,
Be not so simple ;
Take good courage,
And rouse up thy spirits.

No, no, the evil one has not
Any power over thee.
And in no wise doubt
That thou art in God's grace.

My lord, I have not
Any doubt thereof.
And, as Marché is here,
We had better bury him.

Accordingly they do bury poor Marché ;
then *exeat omnes* ; then *enter* Satans
and dance.

Here we must stop our extract-specimens, although we have as yet reached only stanza 324 of the text of the Pastorale. In the original there are upwards of 1,200 *verses* (not lines), besides the long prologue and the epilogue. The metre seems to be nearly that of some of our English ballads ; the lines of equal length, and with the third and fourth very frequently, but not invariably, rhyming. The reader may have noticed

too that there are traces of what appears to be a kind of parallelism, perhaps the remnants of an older stage of the Basque poetry—the idea expressed in the last two lines of one verse being often repeated in balanced cadence in the first two lines of the succeeding verse. This is far more apparent in the original than in our translation, which merely aims at giving the meaning, as near as may be, line by line. But besides this, our MS. of the piece is very corruptly written. The Basque is more of a spoken than of a written language ; few, even of the Basques themselves, are initiated into the mysteries of its orthography, fixed rules for which, indeed, do not even exist. French or Spanish being the language of commercial and of official life, even where Basque is still the organ of daily life, there is comparatively small occasion for writing the native idiom. Hence, when the Basque has to be written, it is too often, as in this case, spelt phonetically, and as the syllables would sound if the language were French ; and thus there is going on a progressive debasement of the language. Few tasks would be more difficult and ungrateful than that of editing a pure text of a Basque Pastorale. Not only the incidents and arrangements, but even the language varies in different copies, and almost each time a Pastorale is acted it is re-edited and remodelled according to the taste of the director for the time being. Thus we found at once two texts (and how many more there may be we have no notion) of “Richard, Duc de Normandie.” The one, of which we have the prologue, is comparatively pure Basque ; the other, which is nearly that which we actually heard at Larran, and from which the above translation has been made, is much more corrupt.

That which would most strike the spectator in witnessing these Pastorales is the wondrous activity and powers of endurance in these Basque peasants. The three Satans were not, I think, off the stage more than a quarter of an hour at any one time, and, when on it, were almost continually dancing their Satanic

dance, filling up every pause caused by change of actors, or otherwise, in the performance. And this dance is not of the quiet, stately, walking kind—not a bit like the languid lounge of a used-up swell in a London ball-room; but it is one of leaps, and bounds, and whirls, and of rapid and complicated steps, such as must try the wind and muscle and sinew of the performers to the utmost. No shirking is allowed or even thought of; in fact, it is a severe gymnastic exercise. Now the dance was kept up by these lads, with little intermission, not only through these nine hours of the actual play, but for many others of the previous night, of the same evening, and of the succeeding day. When on the stage and not actually dancing, the Satans were rushing about in a wild but not ungraceful way, yet still sufficiently trying to wind and limb. For it is curious to observe how the Basque idea of virtue and heroism seems to be associated with quietness of demeanour and gesture. The Angel glided along most gently with noiseless steps; the Archbishop paced slowly and solemnly across the stage; Richard and Charlemagne, even when in most terrible wrath, never went beyond their stately march; their inferior followers sometimes shook their fists at their enemies, and occasionally stamped at them: but the English were always rushing along at the double-quick, and the Saracens stamped and raved about as if in frenzied rage, and the Satans were never still. Endless, aimless, restless motion seemed to be the devils' peculiar attribute.

As has been said above, the female parts were acted by boys; and excellently well they were played too. Many a young lady who thinks herself not ill-looking might be jealous of the beauty of Clarissa and the false Brindamour at Larran; and not of their appearance only, for their whole bearing was most lady-like. Indeed, a lady quietly remarked to the writer, with that exquisite sweet malice wherewith French ladies so much delight to accipunctuate their English sisters, "I have never seen any English lady handle her fan nearly so gracefully as that Basque boy does; *they ALWAYS*

make themselves in a heat by blowing so hard, but look at *him*." The voice, too, was admirably managed, and the feminine tones imitated to perfection. Altogether, the boy-lady proved a far better substitute for the real lady than any of us could have imagined beforehand.

As to the origin and history of these Pastorales:—No definite traces of them are to be found beyond the twelfth or thirteenth century, after the very late establishment of Christianity among these remote valleys. The music and dances are undoubtedly ancient, and appear to have a distinct national character; but the Saracens introduced are all (except in some Pastorales of recent origin) from the Holy Land; the anachronisms of the plays make Clovis and Charlemagne coeval with the Crusaders; and, as far as we are aware, none touch on the earlier and neighbouring struggle with the Moors in Spain. The names of the devils, too, are distinctly those of the romances of chivalry,—Satan, and Brindamour, and Bulgifer; there is not a trace, as far as we can discover, of the names of the heathen Basque deities, as given in the list compiled by Cénac-Moncaut. The stories seem mainly to be derived from the Lives of the Saints, the Mysteries, and especially from the "*Chansons de Geste*" of the Middle Ages, the Arthurian and Carolingian Epics. But how came these poems, which breathe the very spirit of feudalism, to be adopted among the Basques, so many of whose traditions and instincts are so antagonistic to feudalism, and among whom the traces of feudalism are comparatively so few? How comes it that the victors of Charlemagne and the slayers of Roland should be those who alone now celebrate their fame? There can be little doubt, we think, that the Tragédie of "*Richard, Duc de Normandie*" is derived from some lost epic of Northern France (it is full of that insatiable lust of fighting for fighting's sake, which made the Scandinavian Paradise an ever-renewed battlefield, and which does not exist at all in the Basque character); and the outline of many another old "*Chanson de Geste*"

might doubtless be recovered from these Basque Pastorales, if the study were worth the while. These might have been introduced through the close intercourse between Basque and Norman sailors in the thirteenth century, when they were respectively the hardest seamen in the world; but, considering that La Soule, where alone these Pastorales are acted, and where, as far as is known, they have almost exclusively been composed,—considering that this is the most remote of the Basque provinces from the sea—the fact would seem to point rather to the influence of the neighbouring petty feudal and chivalrous courts of Armagnac, Béarn, Bigorre, Foix, and Navarre, as the media whence the subjects of these dramas may have been derived in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. But then, if these pastorales are of so comparatively late a date, how is it that we have no account of their introduction? The obstacle of language does not seem wholly to account for this. Were they intended to supplant some former heathen festivals, to be a concession to tastes already established among the Basques; or were they introduced originally as a means of instructing the people in Christianity? In this very district of La Soule there is a curiosity of church architecture, which is explained, rightly or wrongly, after a somewhat analogous fashion. Many of the churches are observed to be crowned with three small triangular towers of equal size, and which look as if they were an after-thought to the plan of the main building; and these are said to have been constructed in order to impress on the Basques the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, which they had great difficulty in comprehending by mere verbal instruction, till it was thus substantially brought before their eyes. Whatever their origin and history, these Pastorales we believe to be unique in Europe.¹ At

one time they must have played a very prominent part in the education of the people—in fact, have been their chief literary culture; embracing as they do almost all things in earth and heaven in their encyclopædic length. But they are disappearing even in La Soule. At Mauléon, we found the whole affair rapidly degenerating into the common buffoonery of a village theatre; the Basque music exchanged for the operatic and waltz airs of the day; the actors old, and half ashamed of their parts, and seeking to raise a laugh by farce and gross buffoonery and indecent gesture; and the dresses hired from the theatre at Bayonne.

In conclusion, if this description should have roused in the minds of any of our readers a desire to witness one of these Pastorales, we must remark that we believe a few years will see the last of these performances, at least in any of their seriousness and simplicity, without which they will be no more worth seeing than any other village stage. The whistle of the steam-engine can now be heard almost in the heart of La Soule; and the tourist can easily reach it from any of the central stations of the Pau and Bayonne railway. But it is more difficult, when in the valley, to discover when and where a Pastorale is to be acted. There are no flaming hand-bills pasted on walls and market-places. The traveller must inquire of mine host, of his driver, and of other worthies whose acquaintances he may make. Almost for a certainty there will be more than one Pastorale about the time of the great summer festivals, St. Peter's or St. John's day; and, if the tourist can choose which of two Pastorales to witness, let him select the most inaccessible—by all means one higher up the valley than Mauléon. Tardets, Licq, and Larran are the villages which bear away the bell in these representations. May he have as fine weather, as fair and amiable an interpreter, and as good-natured a reception as had the present writer in June, 1864!

last year in Paris, by Aubry. We regret that we have not seen it.

¹ In Brittany rhymed mysteries seem to have been acted till very lately; but the representation of them, we know not for what reason, was prohibited by the police. A translation of one of these, "Sainte Tryphine et le Roi Arthur," by M. F. M. Luzel, was published

THE FINANCES OF FRANCE AND ENGLAND.

BY LORD HOBART.

A RECENT article in the *Revue des deux Mondes* draws an interesting comparison between the financial condition of France and that of England.

The English balance-sheet for 1863-4 shows, the writer says, a surplus of 3,152,000*l.*; while in that of France for the same period there is a probable deficit of 1,720,000*l.* The expenditure of England, which in 1860-61 was 72,500,000*l.* was reduced to 70,808,000*l.* in 1861-2; to 69,302,000*l.* in 1862-3; and to 67,186,000*l.* in 1863-4; while the estimate for the current year is less by 166,000*l.* than the last-named amount. Moreover, during these five years taxes have been removed or reduced to the extent of 9,415,000*l.* On the other hand, the expenditure of France was, in 1860, 83,360,000*l.*; in 1861, 86,840,000*l.*; in 1862, 90,000,000*l.*; in 1863, 92,000,000*l.*; her probable expenditure for 1864 is 94,200,000*l.*; and for 1865, 94,880,000*l.*; while in each of these years there has been a deficit, and on the whole period additional taxation to the extent of 2,960,000*l.* Again, the expenditure of England in 1852-3 was 50,291,000*l.*; it is now 67,000,000*l.*; showing (when allowance has been made for a sum of 4,692,000*l.* on account of "expenses of collection," which appeared in the budget for the first time in 1857) an increase of 12,000,000*l.* On the other hand, the expenditure of France was, in 1852, 57,680,000*l.*; and in 1863, 92,000,000*l.*; showing an increase of 34,000,000*l.* With respect to the debts of the two countries—that of England was, in 1815, 861,000,000*l.* on which the annual charge was 31,646,000*l.* By the year 1853 it had been reduced to the extent of 92,000,000*l.*; but it was again increased by the Crimean War to 805,000,000*l.*; since which it has been diminished by 16,800,000*l.*; being now, in round numbers, 790,000,000*l.* The ordinary

funded debt of France was, in 1814, 52,000,000*l.*; it is now more than 440,000,000*l.* and the charge upon it 13,600,000*l.* The total nominal capital of the French debt, funded and unfunded, M. Bonnet states at 560,000,000*l.* and the annual charge upon it (in which he includes the sinking fund and the charge for "dotations") at 27,934,948*l.*; while the total charge upon the English debt for the year 1863 was (he says) 28,115,667*l.*

These figures are, in some respects, less favourable to England than the writer supposes. The fact that Mr. Gladstone's actual surplus for 1863-4 was only 2,352,000*l.* instead of 3,152,000*l.* as M. Bonnet states, may, perhaps, be hardly worth mentioning. But it is important to notice that the expenditure of either country, as given by M. Bonnet, does not include "departmental and communal" expenses; and there can be no doubt that the expenditure of England under this head (including, as it does, a single item of some 8,000,000*l.* for Poor Rates, which are unknown in France) is so much larger than that of France as to place the real outlay of the two countries much more nearly upon a level than appears. In the next place, though it is true that since the year 1860-61 there has been an annual reduction of our expenditure, it is also true that our expenditure is at the present moment greater by 4,000,000*l.* than it was in 1858, a year in which the Budget had very imperfectly recovered from the inflammatory attack brought on by the Crimean war. With respect to the French debt, M. Bonnet himself states that a great part of the increase which has taken place since 1814 was incurred immediately after that year for the purpose of "repairing the disasters" consequent on the revolutionary war. It would have been fairer, therefore, to

date the comparison from a later year. M. Bonnet contrives to run up the charge upon the French debt to within a short distance of our own; but there is this important difference in favour of France, that no inconsiderable part of the annual charge upon her debt consists of a sinking fund, by means of which the debt itself is in course of gradual extinction. There remains the unpleasant but inevitable reflection that our own debt is still, in actual solid bulk, greater, even on M. Bonnet's showing, by nearly one-third than that of France.

There is, however, a subject of more importance than our financial position considered in relation to that of France; and that is, our financial position considered in itself. In a free country, where the hands that hold the purse-strings are subject to the incessant, vigilant, and inevitable control of Parliament and the public; in an eminently commercial country, where wealth advances with a steadiness and swiftness elsewhere unknown, and the productiveness of fiscal imports increases with corresponding rapidity; in a singularly practical country, where the shrewd conduct by individuals of their own business is reflected in the administration of public affairs,—it would be strange if the balance-sheet did not compare advantageously with that of any other nation. Viewed not relatively but absolutely, the picture is by no means so gratifying. In the year 1842-3 our expenditure was 51,167,236*l.*; and it remained for the following ten years at nearly the same figure, the amount for 1852-3 having been 50,782,476*l.* Our expenditure for 1864-5 is estimated in round numbers at 67,000,000*l.*, showing an increase upon that for 1852-3 ostensibly of about sixteen millions, but actually (when the account is rectified for the purposes of comparison) of about fourteen and a half millions. This is surely a condition of affairs which is very far from being a subject for self-gratulation. That at a time when (exception being made of those petty hostilities in remote parts of the world, which are of comparatively small financial

importance, and which, moreover, are little to the purpose, since they may be said to have long ago assumed a chronic character) we are neither at war, nor, to all appearance, in the remotest danger of being so, having adopted a non-intervening and strictly defensive policy, our expenditure should be greater by some 28 per cent. than it was twelve years ago, is a fact to be viewed, if with patience, certainly not with complacency. It is no answer to urge, though the statement is undoubtedly true, that the wealth of the country has increased by at least as large a percentage as its expenditure, and therefore that though there is additional expenditure there is no real addition to taxation. The taxation of the country is heavier by 28 per cent., not than it was in 1852-3, but than it would have been at the present time but for the increase in the national outlay. And that it should be thus heavier is anything but satisfactory. A nation which has made regular annual progress in commercial prosperity, and may fairly calculate upon its continuance in future years, has a right to expect, in the absence of disturbing causes, not that the burden of taxation will remain stationary, but that it will become progressively lighter. Every increase in the national wealth implies a proportionate increase in the productiveness of existing taxes, or, in other words, an increase of revenue. But as, by the supposition, nothing has occurred to occasion an increase in the cost of government, the increase of revenue is not required, and a reduction of taxes ensues. Stationary commerce with increasing expenditure means increased taxation; progressive commerce with stationary expenditure means diminished taxation. And if, while its wealth increases, the percentage of its contributions to the treasury remains the same, a nation is deprived of one of the legitimate advantages of commercial improvement, and has certainly no reason to look with unmixed complacency on the state of its affairs. Still less has it reason to do so when no exceptional cause is at work sufficient to

account for the abnormal scale of expenditure which is the source of the evil. If such a cause exists, the evil, however much it may be regretted, should be cheerfully endured; if not, it is one which calls not only for regret, but for remedy. The idea that a nation, like an individual, should increase its expenditure as its wealth increases, and that therefore any addition to the national expenditure affords no ground for dissatisfaction provided that there is a corresponding addition to the national wealth, is based upon a false analogy. The parallel case is rather that of an individual who, because his income had improved, should authorise his agent to manage his affairs in a more expensive manner, though nothing whatever had occurred to necessitate their more expensive management. Undoubtedly, as a nation advances in wealth and population, the cost of an administration of its affairs proportionate to their extent and importance tends also to advance; but, speaking generally, it is only after a period of time much longer than that to which the present comparison applies that any marked difference in this respect can have taken place. In the present instance it is obvious that no such explanation can be given of apparently plethoric Budgets.

If we now inquire as to the particular direction which the public extravagance has taken, we find (as was to be expected) that it is that of naval and military armaments. The expenditure on the army and navy (including ordnance) in 1841-2 was 14,882,190*l.*; in 1852-3, 15,768,417*l.*; and the estimate for them in the current financial year is 25,276,000*l.* (exclusive of the cost of "fortifications"), showing an increase of nearly ten millions. Thus of the fourteen and a half millions which we have found to be the total increase of expenditure in the present year, as compared with the year 1852-3, no less than ten millions are consumed by the army and navy alone.

The simple truth is (and it seems to be gradually gaining recognition) that, owing to various causes by which the

public has of late years been more or less consciously influenced, we have adopted a scale of expenditure only to be justified by the necessity of preparation for imminent war. If, for instance, we had consented, in conjunction with France, and for the sake of Poland, to try another fall with the colossal power of Russia; and if, by some chance, the Russian answer to the "*ultimatum*" had been delayed or doubtful for a year, our present outlay would have been no unreasonable one during that year. As it is, we submit to the charge, without having incurred the necessity. We protest loudly against intervention, but not against its cost. We decline to indulge in the luxury, but not to pay for it. We refuse to fire a shot for suffering humanity, but not to incur the expense which was the chief reason for our refusal; and the only incident of a "meddling" policy which we bear with equanimity is that which we look upon as its principal disadvantage.

If an opponent of reduced estimates be asked what are the grounds of his opposition, there are only two upon which he will insist with any tenacity:—"reconstruction of the navy," and "our powerful neighbour." With respect to the first, he will forget that he has to account for an extraordinary expenditure, on the army and navy alone, of some ten millions; that at a cost of one million annually six iron-vessels of the most powerful and expensive kind could be annually constructed; and that we have now been "reconstructing" for several successive years. With regard to the second, there are persons who begin to doubt whether—"our powerful neighbour" having neglected one or two signal opportunities, not likely ever to return, of inflicting upon us the mischief which he is supposed secretly to intend, and it being his interest, as well as apparently his earnest desire, to keep the peace with this country—this ground for "bloated armaments" is any longer tenable. But, even supposing that it actually exists, the firmest believer in designs of invasion masked under the garb of friend-

ship must admit that there is no such immediate or pressing danger as to require an extraordinary outlay of anything like the present amount. And he should be reminded that, when at length the traitor is unmasked, the quarrel picked, the sword drawn, and the vital force of each combatant about to be tested to the uttermost, it will not be without notice and time for preparation given to this country; and that she will be all the better fitted to engage in that or any other such desperate struggle for having husbanded her resources, and lived with some regard to a reasonable economy. In this point of view, not only those who are anxious for a pacific policy, but those who are urgent with the Government to be "prepared for war," should advocate a judicious but vigorous retrenchment.

There is yet another aspect of recent "financial statements" which is calculated to excite emotions other than those of unmingled gratification, and upon which we are to be consoled with not only absolutely, but in relation to most other civilized countries. We are not only spending a very large amount beyond that which we ought to be spending, but we are raising seven or eight millions annually by means of an income tax. Now there is undoubtedly much to be said on either side of the abstract question as to the comparative advantages of direct and indirect taxation. But there are two practical objections to the income tax as a permanent impost, the first of which is singularly cogent, the second still more so, and which taken together would appear to be conclusive. The first is the extreme discontent and impatience with which the tax is borne, owing chiefly to the inequality of its operation—an inequality of which the removal has been repeatedly pronounced by competent authorities to be impossible;—the second is, that to treat it as a permanent tax is to lose or greatly impair it as a reserve. That a sound system of finance implies the existence of some highly productive and readily accessible fiscal instrument to which a

nation may resort in times of great and costly national emergency, and that in the fulfilment of these conditions the tax upon income is immeasurably superior to any others, will scarcely be disputed. Thus, by using the income tax when there is no pressing necessity for it and when it is oppressive, we diminish our power of using it when it is urgently required and cheerfully borne; by employing it in time of peace we are blunting the edge of our most efficient weapon in time of war. There can be no doubt that the maintenance of this impost is the dark stain upon the bright result of the policy which Sir Robert Peel "inaugurated," as it is termed, in 1842. Sir Robert Peel's object—the removal or reduction of certain taxes which hung like a millstone round the neck of industry—was of such extreme and exceptional importance as to justify a temporary use of the national reserve. All that he predicted, and more, was accomplished by its means; but one essential feature of his programme, the abolition of the income tax after it had served its turn, remained unrealized. The disease was cured some fifteen years ago; but the patient is still swallowing annually the nauseous draught which effected the cure. There is, no doubt, force in the argument that where there is extravagant expenditure it is well that the "governing classes" should be those upon whom the pressure in the first instance falls. But to use this argument is not to deny that the income tax is an evil of which it is desirable to get rid, but to maintain that it should be got rid of only upon a reduction of the excessive expenditure.

There appears to be some ground for hope that an attempt will shortly be made to remove or mitigate these serious defects of a fiscal condition in many respects extremely enviable; and, when that is done, but not till then, we shall be able to read with a less qualified sympathy the panegyrics of French writers upon our own financial prosperity.